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The Week

THE announcement from London of Mr. Lloyd George's intention of attending the Washington Conference will send a shiver down the back of many American liberals who remember the evil influence he exercised upon the deliberations in Paris. They will fear his uncanny powers of persuasion, his lack of principle and his reputed ability to "bamboozle" good but innocent Americans. These sceptical people should, however, also remember the change of conditions which has taken place since 1919 and the much stronger position occupied by the American government in reference to the purposes of the Washington Conference. The American government is now seeking to clean up a particular regional disorder in which British cooperation is peculiarly necessary. Lloyd George's presence will render it easier to bring about this cooperation. Not only would his absence have impaired the authority of the Conference and delayed its decisions pending the result of cable communications with London, but it would have placed obstacles in the way of the necessary understanding between the heads of the British and American governments. Whether or not the United States can negotiate an agreement with Japan about China depends chiefly on the policy and temper of Great Britain. If the British join with the American government in asking Japan to relax her grip on China and Siberia, Japan will gradually come to consent. But if the British government refuses to join the American government and directly or indirectly connives at the continuation of the existing Japanese policy, Japan will feel strong enough to refuse or to offer only insignificant concessions.

THE importance of an explicit understanding between the two governments is rendered the more desirable by the recently announced change in the geographical distribution of the British fleet. Many years ago when the German menace forced the British Admiralty to concentrate most of its capital ships in the North Sea, Great Britain practically withdrew from the Pacific as a naval power. The protection of her possessions and interests in the Pacific was turned over to her Japanese ally and the Japanese fleet became the Far Eastern division of the naval force by virtue of which the British Empire remained mistress of the seas. It is the fact of Japan's employment of this fleet for her own purposes which has made Great Britain responsible for Japanese policy in Siberia and China. But it is a fact which is ceasing to exist. The British Admiralty has announced its intention of concentrating a large number of capital ships in Far Eastern waters, and of building at Singapore a naval base strong and capacious enough to enable them to become an effective fighting force. The meaning of this decision is clear. Great Britain agrees with the United States in considering the Pacific of more importance than the Atlantic in any future competition for naval preponderance.

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The British government has revoked the franchise whereby Japan acted as its agent in the Pacific and has resumed its earlier policy of using the British navy as the guarantor of British interests and possessions in the Far East.

A LARGE British fleet permanently stationed in the western Pacific and based upon Singapore radically alters the conditions of political and naval strategy with which the Conference will deal. At present the Japanese fleet controls the Far Eastern waters. No matter how relatively powerful the American fleet might be, it could not contest the control of those waters with Japan unless the American government built an impregnable naval base at Guam. In the event of war with Japan the American navy could not prevent the capture by Japan of all territory in the Far East over which the American flag flies, and in the absence of an adequate naval base the task of recapturing the Philippines and Guam is stated by experts to be a strategic impossibility. A large British fleet adequately based on Singapore would destroy this Japanese invulnerability. It would protect Australia and New Zealand against Japanese attack and render them less solicitous about the Japanese alliance. It could contest the control of those waters with the Japanese fleet and in the event of a victory could blockade the Japanese ports. Finally, acting in cooperation with the American fleet, it could in the event of war bottle up the Japanese fleet and starve Japan into submission. Thus as the result of the change in policy Great Britain is transformed from a potential into an actual power in the Pacific—one which is of equal importance to the United States and Japan. She will be independent of Japan and will be equipped to back up her Far Eastern policy with an adequate armament. No wonder Mr. Lloyd George proposes to come to Washington. No wonder, too, that the American government wished him to come. His coming will give to the Conference a substantially improved chance of success.

THE curtain is falling on the fourth act in the tragedy of Upper Silesia. The first act was played at Paris, by the great peace makers who wrote their indecision into the Treaty of Versailles. The second act was played in Silesia by the representatives of the League of Nations who conducted a plebiscite with the cards stacked for Poland, and, when the vote turned in favor of Germany, connived at the attempt of Korfanty to take the province by force of arms. The third act was played by the Supreme Council and once more issued in deadlock between the British policy looking to the recovery of Germany and the French, seeking her ruin. The reference of the question to the League of Nations was hailed as a triumph for that body, and would have been such if the League had had the intelligence and courage to use the opportunity. But again the decision merely registers indecision. From the point of view of Upper Silesia itself, of Germany and of Europe it was highly essential that the industrial district should remain intact. The committee of the League has reported in favor of dividing it; and the acceptance of this straddle by the Council will close the fourth act.

THE division as reported gives forty-three of the coal mines to Poland, and thirty-four to Germany. About one-third of the output of coal is left to the latter. The iron and steel mills are chiefly retained by Germany, but the larger part of undeveloped mineral lands and most of the zinc and lead industry go to Poland. The plan for the payment of the reparations by Germany is rendered impossible. The Germans adopted this plan and began to carry it out evidently on the understanding that the British government would support their claim to Upper Silesia. That understanding is broken. The Germans and the French had come to an agreement with regard to the restoration of the devastated regions. That agreement will fall to the ground. The Wirth government, which represents the most complacent attitude conceivable on the part of Germany toward the Entente, will hardly be able to survive the blow. The German people will rightly argue that it makes no difference in their treatment by their conquerors whether they fulfill their obligations or not. The League has apparently tried to counteract the effect of political division of the district by a complicated device to insure industrial unity. Their administration of such an organization will be difficult—the more so as the mines within the Polish boundary belong to Germans, some of them to the Prussian state. The earlier attempt of the League to control the district argues ill for its success under the new and more trying conditions. The League itself may conceivably be wrecked in the storm of its own contriving. The dramatic materials for the catastrophe have been assembled. The fifth act is ready to begin.

A WASHINGTON despatch to the Tribune confirms what has been generally believed, that Debs on his visit to Washington some months ago was offered a pardon on condition of refraining from the rest of his life from taking part in "Red" propaganda and promising "that he would not lend his influence to inspiring opposition to the laws of the

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country." This is further evidence of the naïveté of our authorities with regard to political prisoners. A thief may properly be required to give parole as a condition of release from prison; why not a political prisoner? A man is sentenced for speaking against a law at a time when his opposition may doubtfully be held to have inspired other persons to break it. What is more reasonable than to demand his recantation as a condition of pardon? It does not surprise us to read that "the Attorney General is disgusted with the attitude assumed by Debs"; or that "Officials here are at a loss to explain Debs's attitude."

INTERESTING in the same connection is the statement to the American Civil Liberties Union by James A. Finch of the Department of Justice to the effect that the attitude of the government toward the I. W. W.'s serving sentence as a result of war-time prosecution is largely dependent on the present views of applicants for pardons in regard to "sabotage and the methods pursued by the I. W. W. organization in fomenting strikes for the purpose of embarrassing the government during the war period." There is no evidence that these men participated in strikes or sabotage for the purpose of embarrassing the government in war time. There is thus no question of recantation but merely of the removal of a gross misconception on the part of the Department of Justice. The I. W. W. prisoners should take part in educating the Department by applying at once for pardon and restating their views.

AT the coming election in New York the voters will decide, among other important matters, whether or not they wish by constitutional amendment to give to the veterans of the war preference for positions in the civil service. This amendment ought to be defeated. The Willard Straight Post of the American Legion is right in characterizing it "as a wholly unjustifiable assault upon the established merit system of the Civil Service. . . . This proposal is only a dishonest attempt to obtain something for nothing, to create at the expense of the public a permanent class of military office-holders who, by advocacy of this amendment confess inability to compete upon equal terms with their fellow citizens. Such an attempt in our opinion is un-American and should be vigorously opposed by all members of the Legion as contrary to the professed principles and ideals of the Legion."

THE position of the United States as the creditor of its allies becomes daily a source of deeper embarrassment to the world. We will not permit this debt to be funded at interest; we will not forgive it outright; we will not allow it to be paid in the only way in which it can be paid—in goods. Great Britain who stands second to us as a creditor nation has proposed to cancel her claims if we would cancel ours against her to an equal amount. We refused. Now two journals, the London Nation and the London Chronicle propose to cancel the British claims independently of our action, hoping by force of example to bring us to decency if not to reason; while the New Age proposes that the British government should offer to pay its debts to the United States in any kind of goods we may elect, and force us to a showdown. We should either have to cancel the debt or accept payment—with the ruin of our industries.

WE sympathize cordially with the British in their exasperation. It must indeed seem to them as if that "vast imbecility" which Thomas Hardy conceives to be the ruler of the world, had made us its chosen people. Yet we cannot forbear reminding them that they profited by that fact, as Sir Gilbert Parker frankly recounts, during the war. They must have patience. Undoubtedly the leading thought in the minds of not only the English but the French and Italian delegates to the Washington Conference will be this subject of international indebtedness, credits and exchange. There is no opportunity for formal discussion of these things according to the agenda, but we suggest that the foreign delegates might combine to make them a special order of the day on the ground that unless something is done to rectify exchange they will not be able to pay their hotel bills in Washington, or their return passage to Europe.

THE American newspapers have paid altogether too little attention to President Harding's message to the Honolulu Press Congress. "Democracy," he said, "has come to its great trial and the verdict will depend largely on its capacity to make men think." Are the newspapers helping the American people to think? A journalist himself, the President evidently doubts whether the American press does help the public to think. During the war, he says "propaganda became a well-nigh universal habit;" and "propaganda aims primarily at shutting up the minds against other conclusions than those which the propagandists design to implant." But "the primary purpose of the press as a social institution is the opening of men's minds rather than the closing of them." It follows, consequently, that, according to Mr. Harding, the press during the war was false to its primary purpose as a social institution.

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The Railroad Strike

A GENERAL railroad strike is at best an almost intolerable public inconvenience and at worst a veritable public disaster. It is a hideously and absurdly expensive method of settling a dispute between the management of the railroads and their employees. It imposes upon practically all the people of the country privation and in the end positive distress, and they not unnaturally retaliate by condemning the party to the dispute which initiates the hostilities and their resulting discomfort. The chiefs of the Railroad Brotherhoods fully realize these facts. They share the ideas and outlook on life of the ordinary American citizen of the middle class and so do the great majority of their followers. They dislike to be considered outlaws and they suffer from public reprobation far more than would the ordinary wage-earner of foreign origin who has not enjoyed the advantage of social assimilation. If, consequently, they decide to strike with practical unanimity, they must have what seems to themselves an extremely serious grievance to which they cannot call attention in any other way.

Such is most assuredly the case. During the war when the government operated the railroads, its policy was favorable to union labor. It permitted and even promoted unionization, and it accepted union standards concerning hours, rates of pay and working conditions. It was, indeed, so complacent that many abuses injurious to the efficient operation of the roads crept into the operating methods. But on the whole the government policy during its period of control was economically and humanly sound. It aimed to create a large body of contented and loyal employees who identified their own interest with that of the railroads, whose opinions were consulted and whose welfare was adequately safeguarded.

This policy was very different from that which the railroads had pursued under private management. Their executives had considered it their primary function to produce dividends—if necessary at the expense of their employees' interests. When the government returned the railroads to them, they deliberately resumed their former policy and to that end they proposed to get rid not only of the abuses which had crept in during national operation, but of the endeavor of the national railroad administration to adjust its operating policy to the standards and the ideas of organized railroad labor. Some of the railroad executives went so far as to repudiate the idea of negotiating at all with union labor and did what they could to break down the newer and weaker unions. The arrangements which Congress provided in the act which returned the railroads to their owners aided the railroad executives in pursuing an anti-union policy. It did not, indeed, leave the railroad employees to the mercy of the railroad executives. It set up a Railroad Labor Board which was intended to mediate between the two contending parties. But it subjected the decisions of the Railroad Labor Board to a condition which rendered a clash with the railroad unions ultimately inevitable.

The New Republic in its issue of October 5th explained this condition and predicted the coming conflict. We pointed out that the "Board is forced by the exigencies of the situation to make awards and is at the same time unable to base its awards upon factors which labor thinks ought to be considered. Over the whole range of managerial, operating and financial policies it has no control. It must take all of these for granted and at their face value without question or criticism or even suggestion. It is left only with jurisdiction over wages and working rules. And these it must adjust with reference to private ownership and the resulting clamor for reduced operating expenses. Under these circumstances a large part of every decision which the Board has made in the past year and will probably make in the future must represent a paring away of gains which the workers have won in the past. For, under the present system of management, lower labor cost is conceived as coming only through reduced wages and modifications in the severity of working rules."

Inasmuch as it was Congress which devised and established this irrepressible conflict between railroad management and railroad labor, it is in a sense true, as the executives claim, that the proposed strike is directly against the government. But it is also true that Congress in constituting the Labor Board left the railroad employees no alternative but to submit to a steady impairment of their standards of living and working conditions or to protest by striking. As the railroads are now organized, there is assumed to be only one effective way of reducing costs and increasing dividends and that is at the expense of labor. The success of private management is made to depend upon taking away from the employees as much of their wages and as many of their working standards as they will give up. In their argument on behalf of an adtional ten percent reduction of wages the railroad executives did not even attempt to justify it by calling attention to a reduction in the cost of living. They argued merely that they could not survive unless they carried more freight and earned more dividends, that they must reduce the rates in order to provoke the offering of more freight and that they could not afford to lower rates without taking the difference out of the wages of their

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employees. Railroad labor was asked to bear the chief expense of the existing wave of business depression.

The government has brought this crisis on the country by the clumsy and unstatesmanlike railroad organization which it adopted when it returned the railroads to their former owners. It is, consequently, clearly up to the government to get the country out of the mess. President Harding is confronted with a choice between two methods. He can take advantage of the unpopularity of the strike to justify the use of strong arm methods, and he can in this way force the employees to resume work without any attempt to deal radically with their grievances. It is entirely possible that he can succeed by some such means either in preventing the Brotherhoods from striking or in breaking the strike, if it actually occurs. But in that case he will have convinced several hundred thousand good American citizens of the wage-earning class that American industrial prosperity is associated with a low rather than a high standard of living for the wage-earner. On the other hand, he can ask the men to call off the strike on two conditions: In the first place that nothing will be done further to impair their earning and working standards until the existing railroad organization is fully and carefully reconsidered; in the second place, that he will ask Congress to investigate the operation of the Esch-Cummins act and to decide what changes in its provisions the experience of the past eighteen months justifies. Such reconsideration and investigation are necessary. A method of organization which conceives economy in labor cost to be derived only from reduced wages and relaxed working rules deprives the management of any inducement to do away with its own inefficiencies and wastes, and it justifies to that extent the worst indictment which the socialists have ever brought against the existing industrial system.

Why a Regional Pacific Conference?

GEORGES CLEMENCEAU in his speech at the unveiling of his own monument revealed with his habitual frankness the more aggressive French attitude towards the Washington Conference. "I see," he said, "that some people are magnificently occupying themselves with safeguarding peace in the Far East. We can wish them nothing but success. But the Pacific Ocean is very far away and the German frontier is very close to us. Why not link together all these disturbing questions?" If this passage contains a prophecy, it also contains a threat. According to M. Clemenceau the French delegation should come to the Conference, poised to discuss European rather than Far Eastern questions and, in so far as they must discuss the Far East, to associate its discussion with the problem of the future relations between France and Germany. Such an attitude on the part of the French will not suit the American government. The State Department has planned a regional Conference which is to treat of the political and economic problems of the Far East as worth special consideration on their own merits.

Why should not the Conference "link together all disturbing questions?" They are in some measure connected. They have been connected in the past. Before the war, British, French and German policies in the Far East were all subordinated to their policies in Europe. On the other hand Japan and the United States and to a smaller extent Russia were independently and specially interested in Far Eastern questions, but this independent and special interest could not accomplish much unless it adjusted itself to the vicissitudes of the European Balance of Power. Japan recognized the need of this adjustment. Eleven years ago it took advantage of the failure of the American State Department to recognize it and in the negotiation about the Manchurian Railway inflicted a severe defeat on American diplomacy in China. From the point of view of the European powers the subordination still exists. It still interferes with the treatment of the Far Eastern problem on its merits. Can the State Department overcome it? Is it justified in trying? What does it hope to accomplish by a regional Conference?

In our opinion American diplomacy is justified in isolating the problem of the Pacific and in proposing its independent consideration. No doubt the isolation is artificial. As M. Clemenceau says, these disturbing questions are all linked together. In so far as they are permanently settled the separate settlements will each take its place in a general settlement. But because the various regional disturbances are related one to another and cannot be permanently settled without the recognition of this relationship, it does not follow that they should all be considered together. Their separate consideration is a matter of convenience and economy. It is by artificially isolating particular problems that the human will and intelligence are able to concentrate on them and find out what they mean and what should be done about them.

But the isolation is not, of course, entirely artificial. The questions which are now disturbing the world are tied together, but not by links of the same strength and length. They form groups and cluster more intimately around particular cen-

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tres. There is a group of European territorial problems in which European nations are primarily interested and in which Canada, the United States and Japan are only secondarily interested. There is a group of American political problems in which Canada, the United States and the other American countries are primarily interested and to which, in the event of a conflict, they are bound to subordinate their interest in European questions. Intermediate between the cluster of European and American interests, there is a less numerous but no less momentous group of problems, chiefly connected with sea power, which are vital to the security of all peoples with coast lines on the Atlantic Ocean. On the other side of the world there is a cluster of Far Eastern problems, in which the peoples primarily interested are the inhabitants of Siberia, Japan and China. In these problems the United States is directly interested by virtue of its responsibility for the security of the Philippine Islands, but this interest is accidental. Its chief interest in the Far East is not territorial. It is economic, commercial and most of all maritime. In the Atlantic the people who have controlled the seas and, consequently, the world's highways have not possessed a large army and have not by the use of their power, except in one flagrant case, threatened the independence and security of other conscious nations. But in the Pacific the British Empire is allied with Japan, which supports by far the strongest army among the Pacific powers and which uses her army and navy to establish a political ascendancy on the mainland at the expense of the Siberian, the Korean and the Chinese peoples. The American nation is vitally interested in the aggressive political plans which the Japanese have carried on under the protection of their own and the British navy. It seeks at the Washington Conference to fasten the attention of the world on this regional disorder in the hope that the independent consideration of it may result both in the removal of this disorder and the consequent abandonment, as unnecessary, of competitive naval armaments in the Pacific Ocean.

American diplomacy has one sufficient justification for the independent consideration of the problems of the Pacific. Some years ago it tried and failed to bring about a general settlement. The conception which gave impulse and form to ex-President Wilson's diplomacy during and after the war was that of linking all the disturbances together and settling them at once. The failure in Paris justifies scepticism about the possibility of reaching by this method even a tentative settlement. It might serve, provided the several powers accepted and were practicing the same principles of international right, but it cannot serve when the nations of the world are more divided by exclusive interests than they are united by the practice of common principles. Nations whose policies are determined chiefly by exclusive interests can enter into alliances with other nations for the purpose of exchanging guarantees and benefits, but the satisfaction of these exclusive interests will interfere with a general settlement. A general settlement involves finally the assumption by each nation of an unlimited liability for the security of all nations. The assumption of such a liability is impossible unless the policies of the several nations become fundamentally disinterested.

When M. Clemenceau talks about linking disturbances together he means, not a settlement of these disturbances which would come from seeking and eradicating their causes, but a diplomatic bargain such as he engineered in Paris. He wishes the French delegation to go to Washington and ask the United States to relieve French apprehensions and satisfy French grievances as the price of possible French support for American policy in the Far East. The French delegation will not, we trust, follow this advice. The American government cannot extend diplomatic and military support to French policy in Europe in exchange for French support of American policy in China. The bargain would not be fair. American diplomatic and military support of it would impose on the American people a huge liability. The French government must depend for the sanctions of its present policy not on the consent of neighboring peoples but on the continued exercise of preponderant military power. The support by France of American policy in the Far East would involve no such liability. The American government is seeking an open inclusive agreement which embodies certain recognized principles of international good conduct, which can obtain vitality only from general consent and which would bind the American no less than the Japanese government. It proposes to isolate the Far Eastern and the Pacific problems as a necessary condition of reaching an agreement of this kind. If it made a regional agreement in the Pacific contingent upon a settlement of the outstanding European and African "disturbances" it would, considering the existing state of mind in Europe, have to pay for a general settlement with the kind of concession to which Mr. Wilson was driven when he consented to a definite alliance with France and to the cession of Shantung.

The civilized world needs for the time being to have its international problems broken apart and

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subjected to an intense special scrutiny on their own merits by the most interested nations. During the war the belligerent nations were drawn violently and artificially together or were forced violently and artificially apart. They are now returning gradually to their natural territorial groupings and are preparing the way for a piecemeal consideration of their problems. This is particularly the case with Europe. The several European nations are more vitally connected with one another than they are with an American or an Asiatic ally. Their primary need is to recognize this connection and to reach by common consent a European concert. American military support of any one group of European nations would interfere with their recognition of this need and their acting on it. Europe should, instead of opposing the American plan of separate regional conferences, take it over and develop it. The world has nothing to gain from linking disturbances together. It endured enough of that during the war. Let each region deal so far as possible with its own disturbances and then, if a settlement is reached, link the settlements together.

Can the American government obtain a settlement in the Far East by means of a regional conference without paying for it by an increase of liabilities similar to those which Mr. Wilson assumed at the Paris Conference? Perhaps not, but it is worth trying. The task, difficult as it is, should not overstrain the resources of a well-informed, adroit, public, firm, candid and disinterested diplomacy. Particularly disinterested. The Conference will certainly fail to settle the problem of the Pacific, if the American government seeks under the cover of an international deliberation to promote its exclusive national interests, to injure and humiliate Japan, to stand in the way of ultimate recovery by the Chinese of their own soil and political and economic independence, or flourishes the threat of coercion as the means of overcoming the opposition to its policy. But there is no reason why it should do any of these things. Its traditional diplomacy in the East has not been successful, but it has been disinterested. It is a policy which cannot succeed unless it is affirmed by general consent. The Conference offers to the American government a wonderful opportunity to obtain the necessary general consent by means of acting on and proving out its disinterestedness. That will mean, as we pointed out last week, the assumption by the American government of the initiative in proposing the reduction of naval armaments. The other powers will test its sincerity by its willingness to take the leadership in vindicating the method of negotiation and by renouncing the method of coercion. It may fail even then to obtain a satisfactory settlement, but it will put up squarely to the American and European democracies whether they will side with a nation which in the attempt to settle outstanding conflicts has given every proof of disinterestedness and inoffensiveness or with the nation which rejected these overtures. By these means the American government, even if it did fail to reach an immediate agreement by consent, would have taken a long stride in that direction by morally and politically isolating its opponent.

The Doleless Unemployed

WHEN Beveridge wrote his great book on Unemployment some ten years ago, he chose as the subtitle of the book the words, "A problem of industry." Simple as it may seem on its face, this phrase had at the time and still has more than an ordinary significance. It succeeded in accomplishing for those who read and used Beveridge's book a radical shift in the point of view with regard to the nature and remedy for unemployment. It diverted attention from the personal qualities of men and women who were out of work and focussed it on the conditions of industrial organization and practice which inevitably produced unemployment. It made clear the fact that progress in mitigating the evils of unemployment would be achieved not by attaching personal responsibility to the unemployed but by making costly those industrial practices that have made extensive unemployment a recurrent phenomenon in all industrialized countries of the world.

Since the Beveridge book was published, moreover, well considered discussion of unemployment has not departed radically from the propositions there laid down. If anything, the tendency has been more and more to place the burdens of unemployment upon those who are directly responsible for the conduct of industry, in the belief that they would in the course of time be forced to adopt measures to relieve themselves of the burden. Naturally this task of convincing business men and industrial managers that theirs is the responsibility for unemployment and that, therefore, they should support those who are involuntarily unemployed, is one that cannot be performed in a few years. So it has as a practical matter been necessary in the period of transition, before the newer ideas have taken firm hold, to devise plans whereby the burden is assumed not by the business men alone, but also by the general community and by the workingmen. Such is the general principle on

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which the British unemployment insurance acts rest. But even here the greater responsibility of the employer is recognized in specific terms of the law which provide a species of rebate to those employers who show the best employment records.

In this country we have apparently not yet been able to throw off that crass individualism which, carried to its logical consequences, forces each unfortunate to shift for himself while relieving the community of a distasteful and frequently expensive responsibility. It is still not uncommon to hear the unemployed described in intelligent circles as men who will not work. Indeed the Director of the Statistical Department of the State of Massachusetts is reported as having testified only a few weeks ago before a public hearing of the Unemployment Conference that there were plenty of jobs in Massachusetts, but that the unemployed would not accept them at the rates of wages which employers offered. The inference is unmistakable. Unemployment in Massachusetts is voluntary, deliberate, and a matter of conscious choice. To support this attitude, newspapers and other agencies in the United States have lent themselves to the spreading of rumors and tales, for the most part unsupported by evidence, concerning the breakdown of the British and Continental programs of unemployment insurance. Such reports have done much not only to discredit unemployment insurance as it operates abroad but to choke off discussion of the subject here. In the midst of this false but successful indictment of European experience, it has become wellnigh impossible to contemplate in this country even the most moderate program of unemployment insurance, much less to convert the public to the conception that the costs of unemployment should be a direct and unescapable burden, now of the community, and later of business.

To this feeling of relief from responsibility, President Harding unfortunately contributed in no small measure in his opening address before the Unemployment Conference, when he warned the assembled delegates and, through them, the country that under his administration it was futile to expect doles from the Treasury. The effect of these words was indubitably to reflect unfavorably on the wisdom of those experiments in unemployment insurance in which the state assumes a share of the expense, and to raise doubts in the minds of those already predisposed to doubt as to whether unemployment was really more than a personal misfortune, to be met by each sufferer in his own ingenious way. The community, so far as immediate and extensively effective measures are concerned, was practically absolved from its obligations. That conscription of the resources of the country, which an emergency like the present would seem to invite, was a matter which did not find a place either on the agenda of the Conference or in the remarks of our President. In so far as the public conscience was unawakened to its duty toward the unemployed before the President had spoken, it remained so after he had spoken.

In face of the failure of the federal administration to seize this opportunity to mobilize public opinion in the direction of comprehensive plans for both prevention and relief, it is gratifying to find that a few citizens of at least one American state have had the courage to analyze the problem of unemployment and to propose legislation which strikes at its roots. In April, 1921, Senator Huber of Wisconsin introduced into the legislature of that state a bill whose provisions are in accord with the most enlightened thought on the matter. The bill places the cost of unemployment squarely and unequivocally upon industry. It provides for the payment of unemployment compensation to men and women who are involuntarily out of work. It seeks to stimulate the prevention of unemployment by throwing employers into mutual insurance companies whose rates will depend upon risk or volume of unemployment. Those employers, consequently, who have been most efficient in reducing the extent of unemployment will pay the lowest premiums, whereas the unsuccessful will find their insurance costly until they, too, have grappled more effectively with measures of prevention. To keep the system from becoming immediately too burdensome, the bill allows an initial period of three years during which the compensation to the unemployed is comparatively small. The fate of the bill is, of course, uncertain; but it is an encouraging sign of progress that a plan based on such insight into the problem has even received serious discussion in this country.

Except then for this attempt in Wisconsin, which for the present at least has no practical import, the country again as in past depressions enters the winter of 1921 with its millions of unemployed, content to let the strong carry the strong, and the weak the weak. The doles, such as they are, must come from a Ledoux and not from the public treasury. The benefits which the English government pays its unemployed are in the eyes of a country which is "politically unafraid" and financially strong, only evidence of public weakness and an incapacity to govern. Clearly it still remains for voluntary organizations with their strikes and pickets to gain through tests of strength that treatment of the problem of unemployment which workmen seem to be unable to obtain by the orderly processes of government.

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Revolution by Consent

THE phrase "revolution by consent" has been given currency by Mr. J. A. Hobson. By it he implies a revolution in the control of capital and industry by consent of the present rulers thereof, not wrung from them by violent onslaught or passive non-cooperation, but accepted by them in a spirit of concession to the ideal of a good life for the entire community of men. It is the basis of the charge of impossibilism and utopianism brought against his latest book, Problems of a New World. It may prove to be an important contribution to social thought. In any case it represents the most profitable direction which such thought can take at the present day; and to those who regard present conditions as a prelude to the breaking down of the entire economic structure it appears as the only possible alternative.

The hopelessness of revolution by violence is one of the lessons of the years since the war. The control of society by a class in possession of arms, munitions, strategic positions, all that constitutes military power, is practically complete. The failure of the German revolutionary movements should be decisive on this point. The conquest of Russia by the Soviets was a revolution by abdication rather than by arms. A successful class revolt is less possible today than it was in the time of the Servile War, because the disparity in means of warfare between classes is infinitely greater. It used to be pointed out that the armories in our cities were skilfully located to give the militia of the state commanding positions from which to strike forces mobilized for attack. In this day of airplanes and bombs such considerations are trivial. The timid philanthropists who oppose letting the unemployed sleep in the armories lest they take military advantage of their opportunity may dismiss their fears. And revolution by class political action is almost equally unthinkable. The absorption of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat, which accounts for such success as the English Labor party has achieved, is itself a part of the process of revolution by consent. Finally, revolution by non-cooperation, by the general strike, is a possibility equally remote. It is being shown today, as often before, that cessation of production which means curtailment to the possessing classes means starvation to labor, and in the long run life on any terms as a practical issue will outweigh life on tolerable terms as an ideal one. And as a cynical defender of the existing order used to say: "We have always the corruption fund."

Altogether the revolution by consent would seem to be the only practical alternative to the present acquisitive society, suffering from increasing maladies until they end in its death. If this consummation were one honestly and devoutly to be wished, or if it were immediately threatening, there would be no use in argument. But though civilization, like the woodcutter in the fable, may through many articulate voices denounce its existence as a blunder and a crime, and call for death to end its sufferings, yet when death appears and asks "Wherefore am I called?" it replies, like the woodcutter, "To help me shoulder my burden." Civilization is a long time dying. It was sick unto death in the eighteenth century. It was given up by Carlyle and Ruskin in the nineteenth. It was long foreseen that such an access of violence as the World War would be as fatal to it as a boxing match to a man with heart disease; yet it survives, and even shows signs of getting about again.

The threat of dissolution is, it is true, an immediate argument in favor of revolution by consent. The call to the ruling classes to set their house in order is imperative. Yet a society never reformed itself under the influence of fear. A more positive motive must be sought in the awakening of the social conscience, the refusal of just men to live by the forced labor of their fellows, the revolt of noble spirits against a system which rests upon the misery and degradation of the mass of mankind. Long ago Matthew Arnold pointed out that a culture which existed for the few and sacrificed the many was necessarily unworthy and sterile. The problem, as he saw it in Culture and Anarchy, was to be solved by a more generous sharing of material goods, the profits of industry. As it appears today it is to be solved only by a division of authority itself, as a measure not of alms but of social justice.

An important element in the process of education by which the possessing classes may be brought to consent to a division of their authority is the evidence of an increasing capacity for control on the part of labor. This evidence is to be found in the wise management and the successful development of those enterprises which labor has initiated. Each of them is a challenge to the present rulers. It is to be expected that each will be subjected to the severest tests which can be devised by the class whose belief in its right to rule is buttressed by self-interest, and which will jealously resent any infringement upon its authority. All the more reason why labor should watch its steps, should undertake with prudence and move with caution.

At present the labor movement is on trial in four fields, the industrial, the political, the educational and the press. In the industrial field, it was

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organized for battle for the purpose of securing a larger share of the fruits of production, and naturally, with heavy odds against it, has taken advantage of every circumstance which could be used to advance its immediate end. It is hard to blame labor for thinking in terms of the job rather than of the enterprise. It is for that reason the more significant that in the clothing trades the associations of workers in America have been able under wise leadership to make a substantial contribution to the organization and stabilization of the industry as a whole. The prospect of transferring such basic industries as transportation and mining from the régime of private to that of public capital depends to a large degree on the confidence which the organizations of workers in those fields can inspire in the public. The widespread selfishness and corruption through which labor employed in the building trades has permitted the exploitation of both the public and itself are a standing reproach to its good faith and an enormous detriment to its larger claims. In any brief for attributing greater responsibility and control to labor, the argument from example furnished by the extortion and calculated inefficiency of the men who are responsible for the great public utility of housing, must be met.

In politics labor in the United States is hardly as yet on trial, but a forecast can be based on its performance in England. The program of the Labor party issued during the war had an immense appeal, and its reception showed a surprising readiness on the part of the classes whose chief stake was in the existing order to consider its professions of responsibility and its bid for control. It cannot be said that the Labor party by its performance in Parliament has strengthened this appeal, or that it has developed political leadership of a calibre entitling it to electoral confidence. It is now certain that apart from some new crisis in public affairs it must submit to a longer course of training as a minority party, or a bloc in a coalition.

In education and the press, labor has taken an initiative that is important and promising. The leading forms of workers' education were discussed in the New Republic of October 12th. The sympathy and support with which these undertakings have been received have furnished the most significant testimony to an attitute on the part of the possessing classes which may make possible the revolution by consent. Here labor is on trial. If its schools turn out to be labor chautauquas, still more if they merely provide training for labor leaders of the conventional type, an order of Jesuits devoted to the greater glory of the union, they will fail to demonstrate that capacity for leadership and responsibility on the part of labor which it must show if it is to convert the world. And through its press also labor is on trial. The argument constantly put forward for a labor press is the prejudice and the falsehood of the general newspaper in matters in regard to which it concerns those interested in the present system to direct public opinion. A labor press may satisfy its clients by a policy of reprisals. It cannot act as a real corrective to public opinion unless it conforms to a higher standard of accuracy, impartiality and intelligence than the journals whose methods it challenges, nor can it present a convincing argument to the public for a larger measure of acquiescence and confidence in the demand of labor for increased responsibility in the life of the nation and larger control of its essential industrial processes.

The revolution by consent depends on the increasingly generous and humane disposition of the possessive classes. It depends upon the conversion of the public from a distrustful and apathetic attitude to a favorable and receptive one. Every undertaking on the part of labor is an evidence of its ambition and a test of its capacity. Every enterprise which furnishes an example of sound judgment, wise direction and successful accomplishment strengthens the case for the revolution; every instance of ill-considered initiation, of unpractical management, of lack of persistence, of failure, weakens it. However strong the reasons may be for activity, political, educational, journalistic, as a means of maintaining the internal vitality of the labor movement itself, the friends and supporters of that movement should have steadily in mind the influence of such activities on the prospects of revolution by consent, and the inferences which will be drawn from their success or failure.

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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION FIFTY-TWO ISSUES, FIVE DOLLARS IN ADVANCE. SINGLE COPIES FIFTEEN CENTS. CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS, FOR COUNTRIES IN THE POSTAL UNION, SIX DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE; REMITTANCE TO BE MADE BY INTERNATIONAL POSTAL MONEY ORDER.

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The A. B. C. of the Conference

Q. WILL the Washington Conference produce a limiting of armaments? A. It may and it may not. The limitation of armaments is one of its purposes but not the only one.

Q. What is its other purpose? A. The removal of the causes of friction among nations which instigate them to arm.

Q. How will it remove these causes of friction? A. By discussing them frankly with other nations in the hope of reaching an understanding and a settlement.

Q. With what nations are we going to discuss causes of friction? A. With Japan and to a less extent with Great Britain.

Q. But is it not dangerous to discuss these causes of friction? May not the discussion result in disagreement rather than agreement? If it did would not the Conference interfere with the limitation of armaments rather than help it? A. Yes.

Q. Then why discuss these causes of friction? Why not disarmament without discussion? A. Because any limitation of armaments irrespective of their causes and supposed objects is precarious. By discussing the causes frankly and if possible removing them, we hope not only to get rid of the armaments but to close the door on rearmament.

Q. What then should be the policy of the friends of the limiting of armaments? A. It should be to spend part of their time on the limiting of the disagreement between the United States and Japan.

Q. What is that disagreement? A. It has several elements. One: the rules of conduct to be followed in China by foreign governments. Two: the Anglo-Japanese alliance. Three: the future security of China.

Q. Is the United States government acting as a government on Chinese soil? A. It is. It is among the governments entitled to maintain foreign judicial tribunals and foreign post-offices in China. It is among the governments entitled to take part in a foreign fixing of customs duties in China. It is among the governments entitled to address remonstrances to the Chinese government if and when the Chinese government attempts to impose certain inland taxes on foreign goods in China. It is entitled to these rights and it exercises them.

Q. Does it propose that the Washington Conference shall abolish them? A. It does not.

Q. From what foreign rights then does the United States government propose that the Washington Conference shall liberate China? A. From rights which are not general rights for all foreigners but special rights for special foreigners.

Q. Does the United States government propose the abolishing of all foreign special rights in China? A. No. Not all. Hong Kong, for instance, is a special right.

Q. Who got the first special right in China? A. The British—in Hong Kong. By it they have made a place that was nothing into a place that is one of the great centres of the trade of the world.

Q. What sort of right is the right of the British in Hong Kong? A. A territorial right. The most extreme territorial right possible. Annexation.

Q. What other cases of foreign annexation are there in China? A. The region north of the Amur and east of the Ussuri—to Russia—in 1858 and 1859. Annam and Indo-China—to France—in 1884 and 1885 and 1886. Macao—to Portugal—in 1887. Formosa—to Japan—in 1895. And Korea.

Q. Are the Europeans less active than the Japanese in the annexing and in the leasing of Chinese territory? A. In the past they have been more active.

Q. Are we proposing any general abolition of special foreign territorial rights now existing in China? A. No.

Q. Why then do we seem to be quarreling with the Japanese about their new special territorial rights in Kiaochau—acquired by defeating the Germans? A. Because we helped to defeat the Germans, and we think we ought to have something to say about anything taken from the Germans. Because the United States possesses historic rights and interests in China.

Q. But did we object to the Japanese lease at Port Arthur and to the Japanese acquisition of the Russian railway running north from Port Arthur into Manchuria? A. No.

Q. Then why are we disturbed now by the Japanese lease of Kiaochau and by the Japanese acquisition of the German railway running west from Kiaochau into Shantung? A. Because China has never consented to the transfer of Kiaochau. Because in the meantime we think we have noticed that the Japanese use their territorial

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rights and their railway rights in China in a manner peculiarly disadvantageous to our interests.

Q. What sort of interests? A. Economic interests.

Q. Do we base political policies on economic interests? A. We do. The British made Hong Kong a free port and opened it to all ships and to all cargoes, of all nations equally. We thereupon were quite able to endure British political power in China without protest. But the Japanese—we think—have treated our traders unequally and unfairly in Manchuria. We therefore think that the Japanese would give us a similarly unequal and unfair treatment in Shantung and we regard their political power there with disfavor.

Q. Is this the whole of our case against Japan in China? A. The whole of our case in China grows out of our belief that no matter what it is that the Japanese governmentally get in China—whether a territorial lease or a railway or a railway loan or a right to have a Japanese appointed to a post of influence—they use it with a peculiar passion for special privileges for Japanese.

Q. What is meant by a special privilege? A. In 1918 the Chinese government needed money for the Peking-Kalgan Railway. It borrowed it from Japanese banks. Japanese traders are now to have a preference in providing the Peking-Kalgan Railway with its supplies.

Q. Did the Japanese invent the idea of such special privileges in business in China? A. They did not.

Q. Who did? A. The French. In 1885 the French persuaded the Chinese government to promise that if it ever laid down a railway in the region of the southern frontier of China it would apply to French traders for the materials for the railway.

Q. Do we object to that sort of special privilege? A. We do. We regard it as the worst sort. It was a special privilege based on locality. It was the beginning of the era of "spheres of interest" in China.

Q. Who next came forward with "spheres of interest?" A. The Russians in Manchuria, the Germans in Shantung, the British in the Yangtse Valley.

Q. Are we going to charge the Japanese with initiating the aggressions on China? A. The friends of the limiting of armaments could do a great deal to limit the enmity between the United States and Japan if they could cause the people of the United States to realize that not one of the great original foreign impositions on China—from the opium trade to the "sphere of interest"—was invented by the Japanese.

Q. Do we now propose that all "spheres of interest" shall be abolished? A. We say simply that in all of China proper, including leased territories and "spheres of interest," there should be an equal open door for the traders of all nations and no special rights for the traders of any nation.

Q. Do we maintain the open door in the Philippines? A. No. Nor do we ask the Japanese to maintain it in Korea. Nor do we ask the French to maintain it in Indo-China.

Q. Why do we ask them to maintain it in China proper? A. Because in China proper it is an historic accepted international principle.

Q. How? A. By treaties and by numerous exchanges of diplomatic notes.

Q. Why do we especially resent the violations of it by Japan? A. Because we think that although Japan did not violate it first she has violated it most.

Q. Most by a narrow margin? A. Most by a very large margin—by a margin so large that we regard Japan as the great historic violator of our one historic Far Eastern policy.

Q. But are we not alarmed by the Anglo-Japanese alliance much more than by Japan's violation of the open door in China and her assaults upon the independence of the Chinese Republic? A. We are alarmed by the Anglo-Japanese alliance because the alliance operates to protect Japan against the consequences of her exclusive and aggressive policy in China. It has operated to make the causes of friction between the United States and Japan worse rather than better.

Q. What can we do to diminish this friction? A. The friction between the United States and Japan can be assuaged in just three ways taken together. First: an abstinence on our part from exaggerated charges against the Japanese, from capricious interferences with their normal development in Asia, and from threats against their security. We have to realize that if it is normal for us to get the island of Porto Rico it is normal for the Japanese to get the Island of Sakhalin.

Q. Will that not be a very hard thing for us to realize? A. Naturally. But it may save us the expense of a trip by the fleet over to Sakhalin to take it from the Japanese and the annoyance of seeing the Japanese take it back again as soon as our fleet returned to America. We ought to calm ourselves on matters that we cannot control.

Q. But will not the Japanese have to do some abstaining too? A. Yes. Second: an ab-

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stinence by the Japanese from pressing the California-Japanese immigration squabble and foible and—above all—a self-denying ordinance with respect to China. They will have to give China a chance to develop. They will have to abandon their excesses in special privileges and unfair advantages in international trade in China.

Q. Are we likely to be able to persuade them on that last point? A. We shall be greatly helped in persuading them if they find that the friends of peace and of the limiting of armaments in America are clear-sighted and frank-spoken enough to know and to say that the United States cannot permanently disarm in the Pacific as long as Japan exploits China and insists on heedlessly violating our historically legally recognized rights of equal economic opportunity in eastern Asia, We do not propose to intimidate Japan, but we can and should make Japan know that it will be more expensive financially to slam doors on us against our rights than to open them to us in accordance with our rights.

Q. Is not this a rather unpeaceful task for peace-makers? A. There is nothing unpeaceful in telling another nation how to get peace, especially if what is told has been admitted by that other nation in its diplomatic correspondence to be just.

Q. Would the British help us to get the open door in China? A. The British in general habit are the most open door people in the world.

Q. Are they in favor of the fair field for us in China? A. In reply one might ask: Are we in favor of the fair field for them in the Panama Canal and in our ports and on our railways?

Q. Can it be then, that we may have to indicate some slight aptitude for the open door at home in order to be better supported in our enthusiasm for the open door abroad? A. That is a leading question. It leads very far—out of the region with which the Conference can deal. The Conference is going to address itself to questions of naval armament and international trade in the Pacific. It is therefore a Conference with a special chance for good and a special chance for evil. It may and probably will in any event produce for political purposes some temporary and makeshift limiting of armaments. But the reduction of armaments which it accomplishes will form a dubious measure of its success. A more trustworthy measure of its success will consist in the amount of improvement which it can produce in the relations among Japan, Great Britain and the United States. Those relations are embroiled, partly because of the great injustice which for the last thirty years foreign nations have perpetrated in China. They have systematically robbed the Chinese people of territory, natural resources and political independence. The European nations began the looting and retain much of the spoils, but of late years Japan has been the chief offender. She has dared to do it, as many Chinamen believe, because she was protected by her alliance with British sea power. The Conference will succeed in improving the relations among Japan, Great Britain and the United States by the repair of this historic injustice and by the consequent transformation of Japan into a nation which looks less formidable and dangerous to her neighbors on the Pacific Coast.

Q. What can the Americans do to make it a success? A. They can give Japan, Great Britain and China every assurance that they themselves do not intend to take over the business of exploiting China and that what they want is an agreement by consent and not as a result of coercion.

Q. Will they succeed? A. That will depend on others as well as ourselves. The Conference may fail to begin the emancipation of China or to lay out the specifications for a settlement in the Pacific. But if it is properly conducted it cannot fail to accomplish the next best thing. It cannot fail to inform and arouse public opinion in Japan, Great Britain and this country as to what the Pacific and the Far Eastern problems are, and why they provoke armaments. It cannot fail, that is, unless it conceals some part of its deliberations and conclusions from the public.

Q. What then should those Americans do who wish the Conference, even if it fails in its immediate object, to succeed in doing away with the obstacles to a future agreement and a future effective limitation of armaments? A. They should insist on full publicity for both the proceedings and the conclusions of the Conference.

WILLIAM HARD.

Metaphysics

There was a man who told me that to draw
  A circle in the dust and call it I—
Myself the architect, myself the law—
  Made me no freer underneath the sky.
He named me prophets and he named me kings:
  "They are; they were; they cease to be," he said.
"Wisdom is in the acceptance of all things,
  For even who see the farthest must be led."

"We know not where we go, nor whence we came.
  Be docile, rest—the fluttering bird is bruised,
Else falls in flight." But wrapping me like flame
  I felt my flesh, imperative, unused!
And then, as in a flash, I understood
  That he was old, and found submission good!

LESLIE NELSON JENNINGS.

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The Miners as Legislators

As a legislative body for a great industry, the convention of the United Mine Workers of America this year went more than usually askew.

The legislators were the 2,257 delegates representing 2,356 locals who, in biennial convention assembled, sat in Tomlinson Hall, Indianapolis, from September 20 to October 5th. They met without agenda, as usual, expecting to hear the officers' reports (for a day or two), debate the 619 resolutions already sent in by locals (for a week) and agree on the scale, or conditions of labor to be presented next March as demands (another week's work). Their president John L. Lewis described the meeting as "the greatest deliberative and parliamentary assembly in the world" because any delegate was entitled to speak on any subject; "we have no set program."

There are no labeled parties in the U. M. W. but there are two camps, "administration" and "anti." Delegates in the first upheld leaders who, as Lewis said, stood justified "before the great American public which, after all, desires and accords to every man a square deal." Other delegates were there "to punish Lewis, Murray and Green for dodging jail in the 1919 strike," and to "tie up the leaders solid on the next settlement."

A summary review of the session would run as follows:

At the start a resolution ordering the scale committee to report within ten days was adopted despite the administration. The anti-administration camp intended to allow the officers no liberty of action and then to pass a rule deposing any officer who signed an agreement without ratification by the rank and file.

Next the International officers' reports were taken up and the convention engaged in leadership duels which lasted ten days leaving only two and a half days for all other business.

The first item in Lewis's report demanded that President Farrington of the Illinois miners publish an itemized accounting of $27,000 used to frustrate a "wildcat" (illegal) strike in 1919. Farrington, a heavy set man with a reputation as a fighter, charged that the $27,000 was a dead issue raked up by Lewis for political purposes; that the money was honestly though secretly paid to loyal members in order to save the union; that the Illinois miners' convention had ordered him not to itemize it, and it was their money; that the principle of autonomy was involved. "If the autonomy of locals and of districts is invaded by the International officers then the life of the union is at stake." When a compromise seemed about to end the debate Lewis took the floor, a bulky man with a booming voice and a face as immobile as a mask. He demanded a yes or no decision; cited the union constitution; declared that defiant officers must submit to law; that the question of states' rights had been settled on a larger field long ago. "Shall the union law which fell heavily upon the miners who were in rebellion in the wildcat strike now fall with equal weight on a state organization which is in rebellion?" The previous question was immediately put amid stormy demands for the floor and Lewis was upheld.

Next Lewis's report demanded that President Howat of the Kansas miners order back to work men at two mines whose stoppage was declared to be in violation of contract. Howat, a gray figure swinging a heavy gesture as if he were hewing coal, told the convention that these two cases involving forty men had been dragged up by Lewis for the purpose of "giving Howat a licking"; that the two mines would have been at work long ago except that the operators knew they could take their wails to Lewis and get attention; that the operators had violated the contract first by trying to impose new conditions; that the Kansas Industrial Court, along with the operators and the International officers, was telling the miners to go back to work, "and we're telling the Industrial Court to go to hell"; that next Tuesday he must give a $9,000 bond to the Industrial Court not to call any more strikes or go to jail.

Lewis began his reply sarcastically: "I shall not undertake to speak through the bars of a jail." He "assumed that the mine workers' union is a business institution"; argued that the union could survive only through its reputation for fulfilling contracts; that Howat's mad course in Kansas was the blot on the union's reputation; that the union's great struggle for a contract in Mingo County, West Virginia, was imperilled; that suits were being brought every day against the union as an unlawful faithless organization. "Do you want another Coronado damage suit or do you want your contracts carried out by all, Howat included?"

As he finished, Howat's party clamored for a vote but the president refused to close debate. A man on the platform handed to Lewis documents which he waved at the convention—legal papers. They were for another suit, just served, filed by

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West Virginia operators in the federal court in Indiana asking a permanent injunction against the United Mine Workers as an unlawful organization which did not fulfill its contracts.

Consideration of the suit interrupted the debate; so did a visitation from Samuel Gompers who told the convention that in the course of resisting such an injunction he hoped to be able to see Lewis in jail. After four days the question was determined by roll call vote. It took more than an entire day to call the roll; the result was 2,753 votes for Lewis's position, 1,781 for Howat's. Howat departed for Kansas and jail. The administration on the strength of its victory quickly carried the next point in Lewis's report—adoption of a rule that the eight U. M. W. delegates to the A. F. of L. Convention must vote as a unit.

Then the anti-administration party attacked the report on its approval of increases made in officers' salaries. The debate was thundery. The administration closed debate at a time chosen by it; it was beaten on a rising vote. The Illinois delegates pressed their advantage by moving that the officers return to the treasury the increase already taken by them. Lewis faced the issue: "The motion implies that your officers are thieves and should make restitution." On a viva voce vote the chair declared the proposition beaten; the same on a rising vote. Then Illinois demanded a roll call. It took another day to call the roll; the administration won, 2,925 votes to 1,510, and passed a rule making another roll call impossible.

Illinois threatened to bolt, then decided to stay with the proviso: "If we can't be heard here, nobody else shall be." The convention became a bedlam. For hours at a time resolutions were brought up, "debated," and voted without fifty people knowing what was going on. In this din Lewis's recommendation that the scale be put off to a reassembled convention in February was carried; the proposition to submit future settlements to a referendum was beaten; the resolution to elect organizers "in order to weaken the Lewis machine" was beaten; the nationalization of mines was reaffirmed without opportunity for debate. The majority was as resentful as the minority. Every few minutes there would be a vote; the platform would signal "aye" and obtain a roar; the back of the hall would follow with an explosion of "no"; the chair would declare "the motion prevails."

At the very end came a reaction. The convention overwhelmingly elected Howat over the administration candidate for first delegate to the International Mining Congress. But the administration "had shown them who's running the mine workers."

What conclusions can be drawn concerning the miners as legislators?

In the first place these 2,257 delegates are only half of the government of the coal industry. Elsewhere, generally behind closed doors, much smaller groups are holding meetings—the operators. It is as if everything the miners resolved on had still to go to a house of lords. The consciousness that their legislation is not final, colors every act. It makes for fighting moods and poses, not for reasonable debate. The letter of their law they have still to go out and drive home, with a mighty but clumsy hammer—the strike.

Not only is half the government absent but a super-government beclouds the offing. The convention is like a colonial congress before '76; the king is liable to erupt at any hour. Speculation on what the United States government may do colors the miners' legislation. Federal authority has no fixed place in governing coal. Here it may rush in with federal troops, there with summonses to its courts in injunction proceedings. During the convention it evolved, via an Unemployment Conference, demands that the miners forego now a strike in the spring. Threats of emergency powers for the president and of governmental commissions to fix (the miners say reduce) wages are upsetting to the delegates' sense of reality. State and county governments add to the demoralization. President Keeney and Secretary Mooney of West Virginia were not at the convention; they were in jail awaiting trial; half the West Virginia delegates returned expecting jail; Howat went away to jail; all the leading officials go to Federal court this month on the latest injunction suit; and 125 federally indicted union officers and operators still face trial for "conspiracy." Dail Eireann in Dublin is more secure in its authority than the miners' convention.

These facts go far toward explaining a main characteristic of the convention—the overshadowing power of the executive arm. The union leaders have a fight on hand; the convention tends to legislate to them the war-powers which they ask. The convention increased the power of the International officials; adopted the unit rule; refused to have organizers elected; tolerated flagrant examples of parliamentary jugglery; abetted the beating down of recalcitrant rivals; postponed the scale demands, "so as not to show our hand now." It was far more a public council of war than an instrument of peaceful government.

Such facts only reenforce another observation, —these legislators followed persons rather than programs. Personal loyalty to leaders is one of the stubbornest facts in the labor movement. It

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has its roots in the jungle days of industrialism. When labor leaders were outlawed or unions hounded, plans could not be democratically arrived at, the silent captain had to be trusted. Many a mine has been shut down because a leader picked up his tools and started home, the miners learning afterwards why they were striking. The leader of the most modern, most democratic union in the country recently remarked: "Every strike ends up with one man to settle it—me." A politic of personal loyalty is necessarily without principles; at Indianapolis radicals supported Lewis, a conservative, and conservatives supported Howat, a radical. Lewis was followed because he was demonstrating that he was a good scrapper; Howat, because he *was* a good scrapper. The three volumes of the convention proceedings will not contain three specimens of the words "radical," "conservative." Such a politic in unions as elsewhere makes for log-rolling, patronage, deals, rewards for the deserving. The development of programs of general policy lags behind. Factions become the order of the day.

Such a condition fosters its own cure. It was the program-makers who gained most at Indianapolis. Farrington won't itemize that $27,000; Howat ordered no miners back to work and laid all Kansas mines idle when he went to jail; Lewis went on with his plans for maintaining the miners' wages and if there is an injunction in a strike next spring he and his following will not bow to it. The faction lines held. But the program-makers —the men in the miners' union whose thought has been crystallizing around the union's policy of nationalization of mines—forged ahead. They got the nationalization policy reaffirmed, reenforced with the A. F. of L. Denver convention policy and with instructions to work it out in terms of a practical government for coal, to educate their membership and the public, and to draft a bill for congress. These things are in the hands of a Nationalization Research Committee, whose members are John Brophy, president of District No. 2, where he has been blazing the way for a national program; William Mitch, Secretary of District No. 11, and elected by the convention as second delegate to the International Mining Congress on the one plank of nationalization; and C. J. Golden, President of District No. 9, to represent anthracite.

Their work is cut out for them. If there is a national coal strike next spring, if before that there is a coal famine and threat of Federal legislation, the nationalizers must have ready a definite program as the miners' alternative proposal or the industry may pass under "regulation" which will not remedy its ills but will certainly fix things faster in place. HEBER BLANKENHORN.

"The Cream Lady"

"THE CREAM LADY," as the patrons of the local market call Mrs. Johannissen, knocked at the back door while I was getting our lazy, town breakfast. I am used to Mrs. Johannissen's erect figure in her stall in the market, surrounded by piles of scrubbed turnips, carrots and beets, mounds of "pickling" cucumbers and tomatoes, lard pails filled with eggs, each wrapped in its square of newspaper, and sometimes a basket of wild plums, or some bunches of "yarbs." I had never seen her on my own back porch, in her decent black market dress, gray sweater, and squat black hat moored against the prairie winds by an ample gray veil. For a moment I did not recognize her apart from her familiar surroundings. Then I greeted her with tardy heartiness, and begged her to come in out of the damp, windy morning.

"I brought your cream," she said, in her calm, direct speech, holding out a quart jar wrapped in newspaper.

She knew that I was astonished. "The Cream Lady's" single jar of cream—yellow, hand-skimmed cream, that pours out in slow heavy richness and whips without question—has long been the object of good natured rivalry between one of my neighbors and myself. Mrs. Johannissen always awarded it impartially to the one of us who arrived first, and nothing could induce her to save it for either of us.

"You might not come next time," she always said, "then my cream would spoil. I cannot afford to waste my cream, and I cannot afford to lose forty-five cents. I will sell to who comes first. It is the same to me which has it."

And yet here she was, a long way from the market, delivering the cream at my own door.

"I do not care to sell to her again," she explained shortly. "I saw her in the market before you and knew I could not refuse her so I have brought it. Mrs. Egge is watching my stall."

Still puzzled, but deeply grateful, I took the proffered cream.

"Come in and have some coffee," I urged, anxious to get to the bottom of the business. "You can drink it while I wash the jar."

"I wouldn't want to trouble you . . . "

"It's all ready," I insisted. "Mrs. Egge won't mind. It will only take a minute longer."

"It would taste good. I had my breakfast at four o'clock. It's a long ride in, twelve miles, with the roads so bad—"

Without further urging, Mrs. Johannissen let me seat her at the table and bring her coffee and

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toast. The coffee warmed her, as I had hoped, quite melting her Icelandic reserve.

"That Mrs. Hickson—I don't sell no more to her. She insulted my Nonpartisan Leader. Last market day. I say then I don't sell no more to her."

Unobtrusively I refilled Mrs. Johannissen's cup.

"Course, most of the town ladies is against us Leaguers. I know that. Well, they got a right to their opinion. With their husbands bankers and storekeepers and all, it ain't strange they think that way. But we got a right to our opinions, too, us farm women. And they got no call to go out of their way to insult us. I tell you how it was. I don't want you to think I'm mad for nothing. I had my Leader in the stall, for it was Thursday. I had it open, and was kind of looking at it, when there was a slack time. Mrs. Hickson, she come up and see me looking at it.

" 'Is that the Nonpartisan Leader?' she ask me, and I held it up so she could see.

" 'You'll poison your cream with that lying paper,' she said, real loud. 'You better keep it to kill flies or to paper the backhouse.'

"I don't like to repeat such talk, but I want you should know what she said. Of course there ain't many, even of the I. V. A. and hating the Leaguers so, would talk like that before so many men that heard her in the market. Mad as she made me, I blush for her. It wasn't a pretty thing to say. But I made up my mind right that minute. She was not going to get more of my cream. No. And so I bring it to you today, and I will bring it every time you don't get there before her."

"I didn't know you belonged to the League, Mrs. Johannissen," I ventured, as she paused and munched her toast in silence.

"I ain't so dumb as all that. We all Leaguers by our house, Johannissen and me and Hans and Berthold, my two grown boys, and Marta, too. Marta's taught at District 15 two years, but she couldn't get a school in the county this year. Course, I don't say it's because she work for the League. But it seems kind of like it. There ain't a Leaguer teacher in the county. Mrs. Nyquist's girl lost her school, District 12. She begin work for the League same time Marta did. Course, I don't say it was because they are Leaguers. But they never had trouble getting schools before, and all the papers talk about hard work getting teachers. Johannissen, he said:

" 'Don't you cry, Marta. You go another year at Normal. Maybe by then we don't have I. V. A. state superintendent no more, and you get school again.'

"I tell him he shouldn't talk so. We ain't no proof that's why she don't get her school again. But you know how mens is to say things.

"And Johannissen, he's always touchy about the League. He votes for Frazier three times already. And now they are trying to have this recall—you might think it was his own father they was trying to kick out of office. He never took no interest in politics before the League. Farm people was too busy. And it didn't seem to make us no difference whether the governor he was a Democrat or a Republican. Always it was just taxes and mortgages and some years good crops and some years bad crops, and always the elevator cheating you and those men in Minneapolis fixing up the price so we don't make nothing, no matter about the crop if it is good or bad. But the League makes us a difference. Us farm folks is not so fast as town folks maybe, but we know to read and we know to think sometimes.

"Course, I know town folks thinks the League is socialism and the devil's work. Town folks is free to their opinions.

"They talk about the State Bank the most. That's what they curse. They say it ruins the state. Maybe. I don't say I know much about banking. But I know they got harder times than us in Minnesota and Iowa. We got relations there. They got terrible hard times. And they ain't no state bank. I don't believe town folks hate the bank for hard times. If there's a state bank, there ain't so much for town banks to do. Ain't that so? They say what would the farmers do without the town banks. I ask you, Missis, what would the town banks do without the farmers. See, it's like this: banking ain't for fun. I stand in my stall. I see a big automobile come rolling up. I see the driver with his blue suit get down with the market basket. The town folks what own that car, they're too swell to come to market. They send the driver. I say to Mrs. Egge:

" 'Whose car is that one?'

"You know Mrs. Egge. She got two lots on north side and raise vegetables. She know the town folks. She say:

" 'That's Brown's car—he got the Prairie National Bank.'

"Another big car roll up. The lady herself come this time, and the driver just carry the basket. I say to Mrs. Egge:

" 'Who's that?'

" 'That's Green's wife,' she tells me. 'He got the Grain National Bank.'

"The biggest cars, they the bankers' cars. Bankers, they don't work just for fun. Now, I say, why we got to put our money with bankers, to make them rich? What if we have our own bank,

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for all our money and tax money and everything —then if banking is just to help farmers, we help ourselves and save town bankers the trouble. But if there's money can be made out of our money, banking it, we make it for ourselves. Ain't that true? But, of course, town folks don't like that. They want their own banks. They hate our bank, and they blame it for hard times and everything, so maybe they bust it up. It's in the Bible." She quoted freely and triumphantly:

"'Where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also.'

"Course, I don't say I know about banking. But I can understand that. What it say in the Bible, that means everything about the League—our elevators and our mill and helping farmers market their stuff, and everything. We farm folks ain't much treasure, but we got more running things ourselves than helping the bankers and the grain men down by Minneapolis get rich. We stick by the League. But the town folks, they don't get so much treasure if we do things for ourselves, so they hate the League. Where your treasure is, there your heart is. You can't get back of the Bible. Jesus Christ understand folks."

"But all the farmers don't belong to the League, do they?" I asked.

Mrs. Johannissen snorted.

"Would there be any recall if the farmers stand together? Would there be any fuss at all? Nine folks in ten in North Dakota, they are farm folks. If they stand together, they can do what they want. But folks don't stand together like that. Some believes every lie they hear. Some owes money at the bank and can't make the banker mad in hard times. Some got bills at the store. Some owes for machinery or automobiles. There's more than one reason why every farmer ain't a Leaguer.

"But there's enough. You see, Missis. I tell you, wait and see. Enough of us got sense to stick. Me, I take one fourth what I get at market and give to the recall fund. Mrs. Mystrom, Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Gjerstad—there's others doing the same. They try to kick the governor out. You wait and see. Enough of us farm folks got sense to stick.

"I got to get back now, Missis. I keep Mrs. Egge watching my stall already too long. Thanks very much for coffee."

I drove Mrs. Johannissen back to the market. She took her place among her clean, wholesome wares, and, as it was a slack time, she unfolded her Nonpartisan Leader. Her face was lined and heavy, her hands misshapen with the toil of a woman who has "raised" six children, and boarded the farm hands herself, even in threshing, and "never had help except two weeks when a baby come"; and who has "minded" the chickens and the calves, the churning and cooking and washing and ironing and scrubbing and sweeping and sewing and canning and gardening and sausage making and dishwashing and darning that goes on endlessly on prairie farms, from four in the morning till ten at night, till the weary days make a lifetime.

The vitality that has survived that bondage has lifted the Nonpartisan League from a political organization to a crusade. It is a crusade of faith and hope. So far, "town folks," even with the backing of city bankers and grain brokers, have not been able to check it.

BEULAH AMIDON RATLIFF.

The Russian Revolution Today

WHILE public interest seems to follow with more curiosity than compassion the progress of famine in Russia—a one-sided interest, indeed, since it unfalteringly assumes that the present political system lies at the bottom of any misery that may aggravate the life of that revolutionary land—it is, perhaps, not untimely to cast a glance at the general situation and to attempt a visualization of the stage which the proletarian dictatorship has reached at the end of its fourth year.

Three facts seem to mark the present phase of the revolution: an unslackening grip of the Communist party over the most varied affairs of the nation, a clearing of the way for a better understanding between the village and the industrial town, and an adaptation of the economic policy to a possible period of domestic peace and trade relations with the rest of the world. While the appalling impoverishment of the country sheds a lurid light under which every effort appears pathetically inadequate, while the elemental calamity of the famine throws a thick black streak across all plans and attempts, the general tendencies, however modified and even temporarily thwarted, must not be overlooked by one who craves understanding. It is characteristic of the American daily press and its correspondents that much emphasis is being laid on things quite obvious, and very little, if any, attention is paid to essentials just beneath the surface.

There, in the laboratory of Russian actual life, during the last half year, great changes have been taking place. Contrary to the forecasts of many a "friend of Russian democracy," however, the changes were confined to the economic system alone, leaving the political structure almost intact. The Kronstadt uprising in March, the Petrograd

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conspiracy discovered in August, failed to shatter the hegemony of the working-class and the leadership of the Communist party. The famine gave opportunity for a display of those qualities of sagacity, quick decision, and exhausting work, characteristic of the better revolutionary elements, which enable their organization to cope with exasperating crises.

The population took the existence of the Communist government for granted. A policy of upsetting a well established national and local administration which has accumulated a stock of experience and knowledge, in favor of another government created on another basis of representation but without the apparatus of officialdom which has been so painfully constructed during these last four years, seems to appeal to the Russian masses very little, especially since there is no party or group in sight which might be preferred. The Constitutional Democrats have been utterly discredited and are a negligible quantity among the workmen and peasants, whatever their hold on the imagination of the intelligentzia and whatever their propaganda in Paris, Constantinople and Prague. The taint of connivance with foreign enemies in favor of intervention has removed this group from the Russian political map. The Socialists-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviki have practically pledged themselves to the Soviet system as a political foundation, and to an economic policy similar to that which is now in operation. Their accession to power might gratify their ambitions and pacify their supporters, but it would hardly mean a perceptible change in the conduct of the nation's business, aside, perhaps, from a still further slump in consequence of inexperience and clumsy dogmatic experimentation. The Russian masses seem to understand this situation quite clearly. The slogan of a constituent assembly may to an outsider have all the lure of judicial logic and all the thrill of a once-for-all manifested popular will; the Russian people, however, know that the convocation of an assembly at present will result in nothing but further disturbances, clashes, convulsions. The bent of the popular mind is plainly towards economic problems. Now that the war is over, that foreign intervention is less likely, that civil war has practically ceased, that the frontiers of the country are more or less secure, that the existence of the Soviet republic, de jure or de facto, is recognized by the other powers, it is considered imperative to begin the work of reconstruction.

The Communist government had enough flexibility and courage to relinquish many of its former principles and to face reality squarely. One fact was paramount: the possibilities of a social revolution in western Europe, which seemed so near immediately after the world war, had become remote. "The international situation presents now a certain equilibrium,"—said Lenin at the May conference of the Communist party. "It is a temporary equilibrium, to be sure, but an equilibrium it is." The federation of Soviet commonwealths east of the Rhine, the reinforcement of the Russian worker by German, Polish, Hungarian, Italian communist labor, the united front of industrial revolutionary forces against the "petty bourgeoisie" or against the farmer who clings to private property, the nationalization of all resources over immense stretches of the world—these elements of the communist "orientation" ever since 1917—had not materialized. Soviet Russia remained alone. Unable to be economically self-sufficient, it had to trade with the capitalist states on a commercial basis. Unable to force its own peasantry into communist agriculture by means of an alliance with the proletariat of Europe, it had to make concessions. Out of this new international situation sprang the recent economic policy of the Soviets.

At bottom it is an acknowledgement of the right of the peasant to the full fruit of his labor on the land that nominally belongs to the state. "Tax in kind," i. e. a definite percentage of the yearly produce instead of the former requisition by the state of all the surplus above a subsistence minimum, is what the peasant actually demanded in his innumerable clashes with the Soviet administration. The introduction of the tax was not so much a yielding to the demands of the village, as it was a means of inducing the peasant to increase his output, since the former policy offered little incentive to exertion and improvement. The net total of this year's tax was estimated at a little over one half of last year's surplus, and in time of good crops it may yield even more, making the difference slight, yet the change of policy is fundamental. The peasant becomes an owner of marketable goods. The state waives its monopoly of foodstuffs. It follows that monopoly of domestic trade must go. The peasant as seller of land products becomes a buyer of manufactured goods. Consequently, manufacturing must become free. The private employer is once more introduced. His business must not be tampered with by the state. Small buyers and small producers may form cooperative organizations to eliminate the middleman. Their property is to be intact. And since private work for private gain is again the practice, there is no reason for the state to feed the population except the employees of state industrial establishments and state institutions. Unlimited bank deposits, charges for communal public services, charges for rail and water transportation, taxation of private property and income, a new civil code, are only a logical sequence of the essential changes.

It is a marked retreat from the Soviet practice of the first three years of the revolution, and it would have seemed incredible to one who followed the trend of Communist policies toward the end of 1920. It was dictated in the first place, however, by the necessity of peace between village and town, and even more by the necessity of unloosing private initiative and stimulating production. What remains in the hands of the state are the mines, the transportation facilities, the largest and best equipped industrial establishments and foreign trade. Concessions to foreign capital may transfer part of the mining and manufacturing business to private management under state control. The very state owned factories are to be operated on a business basis. Money once more becomes the general medium of exchange, and plans are abroad to put the state financial system on a more solid basis.

Much speculation was wasted on the fate of communism in Russia. Former enthusiasts of the revolution were piqued by the new measures. Nervousness was exhibited even by a writer of Mr. Brailsford's caliber. "Is that what the glorious revolution has come to?" was the usual refrain. It must be noted that no such discouragement is visible in the ranks of the Russian workers. The May conference of the Communist party unanimously approved of the new policy. The welfare of the country, the appeasement of the villagers, the increase of the volume of commodities, the establishment of normal intercourse with the outer world, mean to the Russian rulers infinitely more than the most elaborate dogma or the most cherished ideal. "Let us be more modest in defining our aims," Lenin

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writes. "Let us make large concessions, since they are not dangerous for the proletariat which is in the position of a dominant class. Let us rapidly collect the tax in kind, let us lease the enterprises which we can spare, let us not refuse concessions to foreign capitalists. A bloc of the proletarian state with state capitalism is required against the petty bourgeoisie. This alliance must be realized with deliberation and caution." The revolutionary leaders of Russia seem to maintain that the revolution has not pledged itself to any unalterable set of principles, that it owes account to nobody and that the *name* matters little to the new order. What is most precious to them from the standpoint of common weal is the dictatorship of the proletariat which has remained unshaken through all the vicissitudes of the recent adaptations.

The shocking economic denudation of the country makes these adaptations a trying thing. There is a vicious circle. Lack of fuel makes the production of iron impossible; lack of iron hinders the repair of railways; bad railways impede the transport of fuel and food; lack of food undermines all constructive work. With infinite effort the circle is being broken. No reliable figures are available as yet. Numerous reports, however, produce the picture of new stirrings in the economic field. The small independent artisan is beginning to supply the local market with the most elementary necessities. The peasant is glad to be once more the sole master of his produce, and he exchanges it readily for manufactured articles. Consumers' and producers' cooperative organizations have sprung up in great numbers and carry on a large volume of business. Those organizations enjoy the particular encouragement of the state. Nationalized factories and plants are being leased to cooperatives and private entrepreneurs. At the same time, the state owned plants are also shaking off their indolence, having been put on a new business basis, freed from the plague of red tape, and allowed to provide themselves in the open market with the necessary materials and fuel.

All of this really looks pitifully small in comparison with the magnitude of the country. Yet work is being resumed. Simultaneously, imports infuse, drop after drop, new blood into the economic arteries. The volume of foreign trade has grown rapidly since the beginning of this year. Rails, locomotives, agricultural implements, chemicals, foodstuffs are coming in. What seems most amazing is the fact that Russia also exports quantities of hemp, flax, hides, wool, tobacco and alcohol, all of which she needs sorely. A great nation with an industrious population and unlimited resources has been reduced to hideous poverty, yet faith has not died, courage has not vanished, and though multitudes of people labor in harrowing pain and with infinite patience over tasks which would be child's play under more favorable conditions, the striving towards a better life has never ceased.

The famine has put new obstructions in the way of regeneration, yet it has not stopped the process. In a measure, it has stimulated activities and forced the nation to heroic deeds which must elicit admiration. The panic of the first weeks soon gave place to organized aid. Thousands of communists, "responsible workers," were thrown on the famine front. Thousands of others were sent out into the rural districts of the provinces which enjoyed a normal or nearly normal crop,—to collect the "tax in kind." All the resources of the nation, meagre as they may be, were mobilized to combat the disaster. In a few more weeks the unorganized flight of the famine-threatened population was checked. A well regulated removal of children and of industrial labor from the famine stricken area was begun. Homes for children and work for adults were being provided outside of the hunger provinces, though, naturally, neither could be adequate. The main attention was concentrated on the timely collection of the grain tax and its transportation to the famine districts so that the peasants might be provided with seed. Early in September the Russian authorities could state with satisfaction that they had distributed in the famine area 180,000 tons of seed grain, a result nearly approaching the task they had set for themselves. At the same time, private aid from Russian workmen, Red army soldiers, labor unions, peasant organizations, town communities, cooperatives and cultural workers, generously offered in spite of poverty and semi-starvation, gave the famine sufferers both physical relief and the reassuring consciousness of not being left to their fate. The famine was met with the same spirit of generosity and self-sacrifice as would be shown in a just defensive war where the existence of the nation was at stake.

The hunger has not been defeated as yet. Terrible misery is ahead. Yet the Russians have the consolation of knowing that they have done their utmost, and that foreign aid, whatever its extent, is insignificant compared with the work performed by their people. The approaching winter, foreboding as it may be, finds a nation more united than ever, more willing to do creative work, though more impoverished and with less vitality even than in the worst stages of the war. Russia will vanquish the famine as it has vanquished foreign invasion and enemies within, but at what cost!

It is exasperating to think of the enormous quantities of materials and implements, rotting in the warehouses of America due to "business depression," which, offered on a long term credit, could set Russia on her feet and make her once more a great factor in world economy. The world needs the Russian market. Russia needs the now idle supplies of the world. Yet there is unemployment here and starvation there, and no steps are being taken to set the world's economic machinery moving.

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN.

Thunder Storm

O for all soundless Time's
Deep spells to lock it!
O for a little chime's
Clear bells to mock it!

O for a calm, to smooth
Your senses by it!
O for a balm, to soothe
Your breast to quiet!

O for the power to call
Your peace, and breathe it!
O for an hour to fall
Asleep, beneath it!

O for your hand, to hush
Loud caves of thunder!
O for the burning bush,
And graves thereunder!

ELINOR WYLIE.

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CORRESPONDENCE

[The New Republic welcomes communications from its readers in regard to subjects of current interest, and especially concerning articles which have appeared in its columns. Those of 300 words or less are necessarily more available for publication than longer letters.]

A Protest from Conrad Aiken

SIR: The New Republic is invited to find all the entertainment it can in my assertion, in the London Mercury, that America has never had much criticism. That is fair enough. But when the New Republic, playing ironic variations on the theme, puts me before its readers as one more of those many Americans who apologize to England for everything American, I am moved to protest. For as a matter of fact an accident occurred in the printing of my article in the Mercury—an accident which I am at a loss to explain. As my article stood, when it left my hands, it asserted not merely that America had little criticism, but also that there was perhaps a deficiency which was very naturally inherited from the English. The sentence which contained this assertion and which would therefore have acquitted me of your charge of truckling, unaccountably disappeared. The Mercury sent me no proofs—the accident may well have been a printer's accident. But the deletion was one for which I was extremely sorry, and for which your editorial made me only the sorrier.

CONRAD AIKEN.

South Yarmouth, Massachusetts.

The New Russian Bourgeosie

SIR: For months past the press has been carrying dispatches which herald the early return of prodigal Russia, thoroughly repentant of her unprofitable ways, to the solid and possessive bourgeois fold. Not, however, till in your issue of September 28th, I read Mr. Olgin's description of the new men who have silently come to the top in Russia, could I persuade myself to credit the newspapers and nurse the hope that Lenin's countrymen were really taking pains to earn our forgiveness. For the last four years the public has been beset by two rival schools of showmen professing to have on exhibition the only true picture of the Bolshevik upheaval. Saints and spawn of Satan —you took your choice. Into these competitive mythologies Mr. Olgin has thrown a ray of light with the result that they have scattered like ghosts at cockcrow. And in the place of the vanished phantoms there makes its appearance that pleasing and substantial reality, a new bourgeoisie. Mr. Olgin is abundantly detailed about it: it is about 100,000 strong, it has risen from the workers and peasants, is full of self-confidence, materialist, "with an unusual appetite for enjoyment," despises the older classes no less than the masses, is concerned only "with getting things done"; as to culture, it is "half-baked" and strongly enlisted for the classics—and so on through four rapturous columns.

Well, this is something like. We begin to see where we stand. The terrible Russian chaos assumes at last a familiar, rotund, and comfortable physiognomy. Instead of proving the boasted "unique event," the communist upheaval docilely follows the course of every other similar overthrow in history, whether in ancient Rome or mediaeval Florence, in Protestant Europe after the Reformation, or in France after 1789, by heaving to the surface what to the defeated groups is the scum of society, and to cooler observers a body of rude, hairy, submerged men of abundant vigor and an inordinate greed for power. But, strange to relate, this eternal bourgeoisie, which he describes so fully, is to Mr. Olgin only "a new intelligentzia." He studiously avoids the term bourgeoisie, perhaps in the lingering hope of preserving to the Russian revolution a shred of its vaunted uniqueness. I would advise him boldly to cast the last veil aside and begin immediate arrangements for a ceremonial welcome of repentant Russia into the happy fold of bourgeois civilization.

FERDINAND SCHEVILL.

Chicago, Illinois.

The Future of Russia

SIR: Sir Henry Maine in his work on The Early History of Institutions, written almost fifty years ago, when Russian institutions were the subject of academic interest merely, brings out in a few words a very significant fact, too often overlooked in comments on the Russian situation, namely the essentially different backgrounds, both of circumstance and tradition, of Russian and European or American institutions.

". . . It is one of the facts with which the Western world will some day assuredly have to reckon," wrote Sir Henry, commenting on the agrarian system of Russia, "that the political ideas of so large a portion of the human race, and its ideas of property also, are inextricably bound up with the notions of family interdependency, of collective ownership, and of natural subjection to patriarchal power."

Aside from the remarkable prophetic aspect of the paragraph, does it not bid us beware of easy generalizations of the universal necessity of the stimulus of private property, generalizations that have in view American history and American tradition, and overlook entirely the Russian background? Russia has never been fully European; she never knew the Renaissance; her culture insofar as it is national does not strike back to the rich tradition of Rome; the French Revolution passed her by, yielding only a little of the elixir of nationalism to some of her subject peoples, and now the industrial revolution has begun to reach into the country, a generation or two late. She brought feudalism into the nineteenth century and the mediaeval village-community into the twentieth.

Can we be certain then that the strategic retreat now in progress will carry Russia back to the glories of private property, or does Russian history suggest that the Communists will find a way out—perhaps in cooperation—long before the point of complete capitulation has been reached? The strategic retreat will have to go far indeed—back to the starting point of the Revolution and then beyond—before it arrives at the property concepts familiar to western Europe.

ROBERT BINKLEY.

Stanford University, California.

Flying

SIR: I must thank you for the joy I've had in reading that narrative in your paper of this date, entitled It's a Temperamental Job.

Here we find what every man, every layman wants to know—something of the experiences and the thrills of flying across country, and such a flight too, from Salt Lake City to San Francisco. It is a great adventure truly. The writer, Mr. Ruhl, has expressed for me what I've long suspected but never realized in such vivid description before, that flying is the greatest sport of mankind today. What a perfect experience he describes—in marvellous contrast of the bird man who has attained the vision of a condor or an eagle—when he alights and walks the streets of San Francisco to be cramped and his vision confined and to feel how small, how narrow are the lanes and paths and haunts of men.

BEN MILLER.

Washington, D. C.

Mr. Beck's Communication

SIR: May I thank you for the martini-like communication from Mr. James M. Beck to which you so generously gave publicity? Mr. Beck is an asset to any purveyor of print; his is conversation at its best; and be his conclusions right or wrong, the crystal clearness of his thought makes truth more readily found.

Mr. Beck, reinforced by Erewhon, is dismayed by the leisure that an "age of machinery" offers the "working classes." What will the worker do with that leisure? Well, granted some

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reasonable distribution of the product of the machines, he will study law, perhaps; he will learn to delight his fellows with eloquent discourse, he may indeed elect to pursue the hard working, but happy, career that "leisure" opened to Mr. Beck in the seed planting time of life. For as Adam Smith says in Chapter II of The Wealth of Nations, "The difference of natural talents in different men, is in reality, much less than we are aware of; and the very different genius which appears to distinguish men of different professions, when grown up to maturity, is not upon many occasions so much the cause, as the effect of the division of labor."

As a result of the division of labor "the difference of talents comes to be taken notice of, and widens by degrees, till at last the vanity of the philosopher is willing to acknowledge scarce any resemblance."

The division of labor was a great principle in the development of mankind, but humanlike we have overdone it. A great price has been paid for it, if because of its effect, we have lost faith in the equality of mankind.

Mr. Beck leans heavily on the Constitution and the clear cut principles on which our government was founded—yet the central thought there was a *belief in,* and the freedom of, the individual.

That the individual hasn't "come through" as the Fathers had planned, is a question for the sociologists to determine. Enough, that the material is new born in each generation; and so high is my belief in, and hope for, mankind, that I believe, with a right chance to grow and develop, each man child, in the like graces of splendid citizenship, is a potential James M. Beck.

SPECTATOR.

Teaching by Lectures

SIR: When teaching horticulture to a class of juniors at Michigan Agricultural College I carried vines into the classroom and made drawings on the blackboard giving three lectures on how to prune grape vines; later in sections of eight I went with the students to the vineyard and handed each a knife and assigned him a vine for his lesson. None of them knew what to do. I stepped in front of each vine in turn giving a hint or two. One or more said, "This is worth more than all your lectures." Later Professor Bailey tried the same plan at Cornell with like results.

Again I had made a lot of drawings of flowers and gave five lectures on pollenation of flowers by insects and after quizzing them for results of my lectures I made a note like this: "So far as benefiting the students in lecturing on the relations of insects to plants is concerned, the examination of three flowers such as those of beans, blue-berries, willows, iris in the garden accompanied by the insects attracted, would have been of more value than all of my five illustrated lectures." I never repeated the lectures on trimming grape vines or on the pollenation of flowers by insects.

T. H. Huxley was right when he said "Mere lectures on natural history are a *sham and a delusion.*"

W. J. BEAL.

Amherst, Massachusetts.

Holland's Interests in the Far East

SIR: In your issue of October 19th, you mention the State Department's invitation to Holland to participate in the coming Washington Conference, and, after conceding Holland's large interests in the Far Pacific, state it as your opinion that "their connection with vital issues is so remote that the inclusion of Holland seems either like an act of politeness or as a move in the game of diplomacy."

The vital issue of the conference, as far as Holland's invitation is concerned, is the removal of the causes that might lead to armed conflict in the Pacific. Is Holland's connection with this issue as remote as you state? The economic relations of the Dutch East Indian colonies with the powers of the Pacific are of a dual nature. Expressed in the volume of imports and exports from and to the British Indies, Japan, China, the Philippines, Canada and the United States, they are of the greatest importance.

Japan exported to the Dutch Indies during the year 1919, for which we have the latest official statistics, for a sum of $30,830,000 and imported from them for $72,350,000. For China, these figures were $2,000,000 and $12,000,000 respectively. For the Philippines, $543,000 and $4,400,000, for the British Indies—$6,400,000 and $76,000,000, for Canada, exports not given, imports $2,736,000, for the United States $52,194,000 and $76,370,000. Considering these economic relations in the light of the geographical location of the islands, they are not remote to the vital issues of the conference, but very near indeed, closely allied to and immediately affected by any international disturbance in the Pacific.

You have probably followed the recent controversy between the United States and Holland in the question of the Djambi oil fields. Did this not suggest to you that our State Department at Washington saw in these oil resources more than a mere matter of a few million barrels of petroleum of which this country might be in need in the not distant future? The United States can buy that oil as easily as any other nation, provided it pays the market price. Have you not read that Japan also put in a claim to develop part of the Djambi territory? Why did the Holland government finally contract with a Dutch company for the development of Djambi? On the face of it because the Batavia Oil Company had offered better terms to the Holland government in competition with the Standard Oil. But it is well known that the Holland government preferred a Dutch company because of its knowledge that, in case of armed conflict in the Pacific, Holland could rely on her own subjects to safeguard the neutrality of the islands by destroying, if necessary, the wells and reservoirs at a single gesture of the government.

Again, why is Holland increasing her yearly appropriations for her fleet in the Orient, an increase out of all proportion to that of any other power in the Pacific? Surely not for offensive or imperialistic purposes. The financial burden entailed by this increase in her defences had made Holland hope for an invitation to take part in the disarmament discussion of the conference. But apart from this, does Holland's desire to be prepared for eventualities not indicate that she realizes the peril of her islands' strategic location in case of war in the Pacific? Holland's experience in the Orient has taught her the responsibility attached to the possession of her Indian colonies in case of war or threats of war. We need only revert to the Russo-Japanese war in 1904, when she found it necessary to provide for the instant destruction of her vast harbor works at Sabang, the extreme northern point of the Straits of Malacca, known as the most important coaling station in the Far East.

The menace of Pacific entanglements is, like the proverbial sword of Damocles, constantly hanging over the head of the Holland government. It sees in the Washington Conference a ray of hope that this danger may be at least partially removed, and feels that its knowledge of Far Eastern questions may contribute to the elimination of misunderstandings among its neighbors in the Pacific. That this is realized in Washington and by the other powers is indicated by their invitation to Holland to participate in the conference.

THE NETHERLANDS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN NEW YORK, INC.

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The New
REPUBLIC
Literary Supplement

The Function of Criticism

WHAT *is the function of criticism, and what is the present state of criticism? The New Republic has invited a number of contemporary critics, representing every school, to give their answer to this question.*

Criticism Past and Present

THE history of criticism begins with the history of art. When the first artist drew his first horse in red chalk on the walls of his cave, the first critic was at his elbow. And as the other cave dwellers gathered to see and wonder, he doubtless diverted their attention from the artist and his work to himself by raising the pregnant question, "What is criticism, and what is its function at the present time?"

I do not know how he answered that question, but I know that it must have been in one of four ways. There are involved in creative or representative art three factors: there is the artist or creator; there is the material or conception to which he gives form; and there is the public to which he addresses his product. Of course I recognize that in certain cases the first factor and the last are the same—the artist creates for himself alone. Now the resulting work of art will vary according to which of these three factors the artist emphasizes. If he is thinking chiefly of himself he will work in one way; if his loyalty is to his form or material, in quite a different way; and if his leading aim is to capture his public, in a third. So with the critic. He recognizes the three factors in production, and adds to them a fourth, namely himself: and he will answer his question as to the function of criticism according to which of the four he has most insistently in mind.

It may be, though it is unlikely, that the first critic was inspired chiefly by devotion to the artist, whom we may call Ab. Standing by Ab's side in the dim cave he first tried to see what Ab had been about and then explain it to the multitude. He envisaged the function of criticism as that of understanding what the artist had attempted, and of appraising his performance in the light of this understanding. His task was that of interpretation of the masterpiece through the personality of the artist. After the death of Ab, the function of his interpretative critic would be still more important. To scoffers who denied that the object was a horse at all, he would explain that the artist grew up on the plains, where he thought, talked and ate horse, that he loved horsemanship and had remarkable success in picking winners, in short that given the artist's personality and environment—the man and the moment—he could have meant by his marks on the wall nothing but a horse. Thus the critic a few generations after the event became a productive scholar, like Professor Kittredge. Or to other denying spirits who declared that, horse though it might be, it was not the work of Ab but of a follower and pupil, the critic would defend his attribution by pointing out the peculiar trick which Ab had in pointing his horses' ears, and which his pupils forgot to copy. Thus the critic became a connoisseur and professional art critic like Signor Morelli or Mr. Berenson. The chief virtues of this type of criticism are honesty, intelligence, sympathy—and its highest function is interpretation. Its reductio ad absurdum occurs when the critic becomes the judge, and uses his knowledge of Ab's character unfairly against him, declaring, like Ruskin, "Ab was a bad man and therefore he couldn't draw a good horse."

But let us suppose that the first critic had his mind focussed upon the result of Ab's striving, that he forgot the artist in the work of art. Then his problem was to appraise Ab's technique, to point out wherein and why it failed to do justice to the conception. If he insisted on comparing Ab's drawing to a real horse he was a naturalistic critic; if to the eternal and universal concept of horse he was an idealist. He was naturally a superior person and therefore unpleasant, and he gave an unpleasant connotation to the term criticism. When he looked at Ab it was as a pedagogue regards a pupil, training him to produce better results. When he considered the public it was as a lecturer, explaining why the work in question did or did not appeal to the best minds. This line of reasoning might lead him into an examination of the principles of beauty and taste according to laws of psychology, when he would become a philosopher in aesthetics. But he also was under the constant temptation to assume judicial functions. He became the judge before whom Ab was brought to be tried on technical or aesthetic grounds, and who, like Francis Jeffrey, always remembered that the judge is condemned when the guilty are acquitted. But Ab might have had the satisfaction of knowing that to future generations of aesthetic judges he would become a law in himself. To them his first horse would be a standard of achievement, a classic, for the first rule of classical criticism is "To copy nature is to copy Ab."

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But let us make the further supposition that the first critic had his mind fixed chiefly on the spectators who crowded the cave to see Ab's masterpiece. What should he say to them? Tell them of Ab's early life, and his fondness for horses and horsey associations? Most unedifying. Point out how truly and sympathetically Ab had seen and reproduced the object of his affection? But what would that do for their business prosperity or their eternal salvation? No, an ethical lesson or judgment was to be extracted from Ab's masterpiece. And thus the critic became the preacher. He reminded his audience that "the horse is a vain thing for safety." He became a moralist, anxiously inquiring of the work of art "What will it do to the beholder? Will it leave him better or worse fitted for life here or hereafter?" He became the social philosopher, seeing in Ab's horse an attack on human standards of living; or the patriot finding in the patient docility of the beast a seditious reference to a virtue on the part of the enemy. He also became the judge. Finding that the public reacted perversely to his warnings he questioned whether it could be trusted to see the drawing at all; and if the temperamental Ab got himself enmeshed in a scandal the critic became the censor and barred Ab's work from the walls of the cave.

Finally, the first critic may have been chiefly absorbed in himself, in his own sensations, impressions, reactions. He was perhaps used to finding "every moment some form or color growing perfect in hand or face, some tone on the hills choicer than the rest," and he may have found something on the walls of the cave which stirred his senses to the same excitement. He may have seen in Ab's crude drawing something that touched him more nearly than the object in life had done, something more real than actuality, and have felt in consequence a certain enhancement of his personality, a sense of more abundant life. He would try to express his emotion in language, to translate Ab's effort into another medium, and he would therefore become an artist himself, using Ab's work as a source of material as freely as he would have used nature. To the people who objected that he talked of an Ab unrecognized by them or even by Ab himself, he would defend his procedure. "What do I know of Ab? A few facts of his life, probably contradicted by others that I don't know, and which are at best misleading. What do I care about principles of beauty and laws of aesthetics? Who am I to say what is good for my fellow men? All I know are my own sensations. Ab's horse like other phenomena exists for me only in them, and only from them can I honestly bear witness to his art."

I do not mean to suggest that the four types of criticism which I have noted, historical, aesthetic, ethical and impressionistic, afford a complete classification; still less that they exist in classes separate and distinct each from the other. The same critic may partake of more than one type; as he may show more than one critical attitude. He may be by turns interpreter, judge, moralist, and artist. Nearly every critic, however, is predominantly of one type, and shows a tendency to persist in one attitude. Moreover, these different types of criticism predominate in different periods according to the intellectual character of the time. Thus in the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century criticism was largely aesthetic, divided into schools, classical and romantic, of which Dr. Johnson, Jeffrey, and Coleridge are the expositors. The romantic critic tended toward impressionism, in William Hazlitt. In the middle nineteenth century the interest in humanity finds reflection in ethical criticism, in the shadow of which America remains. Matthew Arnold lamented in an early preface to his poems the lack of a critic as aesthetic schoolmaster for young poets; but when he propounded his famous query as to the function of criticism he answered it, in terms befitting a missionary, "to make known the best that is thought and known in the world," and the bulk of his critical performance rests on the foundation of his dictum that conduct is three-fourths of life. The scientific movement in thought, and the accompanying realistic movement in literature and art, naturally led to a criticism of interpretation, biographical, historical, scientific, scholarly. The famous environment theory of Taine is an illustration. At the close of the century, the period known as the decadence is characterized by impressionistic criticism and the emergence of the critic as an artist in his own right. This is the critical attitude of Lemaître, Pater and Wilde, and it is the one to which Mr. T. S. Eliot inclines in his account of The Perfect Critic.

In trying to answer the question What is Criticism? I am aware that with a pedantry which justifies Mr. Mencken's worst doubts of my profession I have drawn entirely upon the past. But it is only in the light of the past that I see any approach to an answer to the question which remains as to the function of criticism at the present time. That answer must depend in the present as in the past upon the intellectual character of the period with reference to the arts. Now it is a commonplace that a leading characteristic of the world today is the vast popularization of the arts of expression. To this democracy literature has succumbed; and painting and music, though defended by more exacting technique, are tending in the same direction. No longer do writers form a caste apart, an institution devoted to the production of masterpieces, seeking like Milton "to leave something so written to aftertimes as they should not willingly let it die." On the contrary in these days of popular education everyone writes or threatens to do so, and measures success not in length of time, but in width of space, not by a fit audience though few extending in a thin line down the centuries, but by the unfit and vast assembly of readers scattered over the whole world who for a week or a month may be held by the charm of a "best seller." No longer does the literary audience consist of a group of connoisseurs, instructed by criticism to make formal comparisons and praise the best. On the contrary, everybody reads; and supplying reading-matter to an immense and voracious public has become a business like supplying it with clothes and food.

In these circumstances the function of criticism becomes one of immense importance. In the first place literature is exposed to two dangers, the practice of its art by the unlearned and the determination of its quality by the masses. It would seem that the first duty of chivalrous criticism is to defend the art of letters from malpractice, as in the past it defended poetry from bad poets. Should not criticism seek to play the schoolmaster, limiting the vast area of subject matter, preserving the principles of form, and raising anew the institution of literature on aesthetic principles which should decisively separate it from mere reading matter? Or rather is not the proper preoccupation of criticism with the author? Should the critic not give himself with all his zeal to the single task of interpretation? Is there not danger that genius will be lost in the mass of mediocrity, and its masterpieces be choked to death among the weeds of the

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jungle? Or finally is not the critic's chief concern with the public, lest it innoculate itself with the germs of its own obscure maladies? Is he not more than ever before called upon to act as judge, censor, executioner in the interest of public welfare? Undoubtedly a plausible case can be made out for any one of these three functions of criticism, or of all together, for as I have said they are not necessarily exclusive. But the assumption of any or all of them depends upon the critic's being Don Quixote. It happens indeed that he sometimes justifies a new relation of subject matter and form; or that, by a tour de force, he rescues a sinking artist, or even that before his condemning eloquence the wayward public stands rebuked. These triumphs, however, are byproducts of his activity, not the main objects of his endeavor.

In the general sauve qui peut, I believe that the critic's chief occupation should be with himself. His first duty is to save his own soul. And this he will accomplish most surely by divesting himself of preconceptions and prejudices whether derived from the authority of history or of science, by preserving in the whirl of phenomena the self-consciousness and detachment of the artist. The mass of production about him is part of the material of the world, the stuff of life. Among the paradoxes of Oscar Wilde a sentence emerges which is profoundly true. "The critic occupies the same relation to the work of art that he criticizes as the artist does to the visible world of form and color, or the unseen world of passion and thought." It is his primary function to bear a faithful record of his impressions. He is valuable for the sensitiveness of his nerves, for the fineness of his perceptions, for the validity of his thought, whether in the field of aesthetics, ethics or human sympathy. His service to the artist, to art, or to the people is comprehended in his conscience toward himself. He will stimulate the artist to more passionate creation by his appreciation and by his competition; he will serve art by enlarging its boundaries, not by circumscribing them; and he will aid the public not by imposing impressions of his own or theories of other men upon it, but by arousing it to reaction on its own account. For "The aim of criticism is to make every man his own critic."

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

The Motive of the Critic

NEARLY all discussions of criticism, it seems to me, start off with a false assumption, to wit, the assumption that the primary motive of the critic, the impulse which makes a critic of him and not a politician or a stockbroker, is pedagogical—that he writes because he is possessed by a yearning to disseminate some specific doctrine, epistemological, psychological, historical, or aesthetic. This is true, I believe, only of bad critics, and its degree of truth increases in direct ratio to their badness. The motive of the critic who is really worth reading—the only critic of whom, indeed, it may be said truthfully that it is at all *possible* to read him—is something quite different. That motive is not the motive of the pedagogue, but the motive of the artist. It is simply a desire for self-expression, a thirst to function more broadly and brilliantly than the general, obscure in origin but irresistible in force. His choice of criticism rather than creative writing is chiefly a matter of temperament—perhaps, more accurately, a matter of hormones and intestinal flora—with accidents of education and environment to help. The feelings that happen to be dominant in him at the moment the scribbling frenzy seizes him and that move him powerfully to seek expression for them in words, are feelings inspired, not by life itself, but by books, pictures, music, sculpture, architecture, religion, philosophy—in brief by some other man's feelings about life. They are thus second-hand, and are rightly regarded by creative artists as inferior to their own first-hand reactions.

If a critic continues on this plane, if he lacks the intellectual agility and enterprise needed to make the leap from the work of art to the vast and mysterious complex of phenomena behind it, then he remains a mere reviewer of and valet to the ideas of his betters, and is of little more importance to the world than a schoolmaster, a newsmonger, or an auctioneer. But if a genuine artist is concealed within him—if his feelings are really profound and original, and his capacity for self-expression is above the average of educated men—then he moves inevitably from the work of art to life itself, and begins to take on a dignity that he formerly lacked. It is impossible to think of a man of any actual force and originality, universally recognized as having those qualities, who spent his whole life appraising and describing the work of other men. Did Goethe, or Carlyle, or Matthew Arnold, or Sainte-Beuve, or Macaulay, or even, to come down a few pegs, Lewes, or Lowell, or Hazlitt? Certainly not. The thing that becomes most obvious about the writings of all such men, once they are examined carefully, is that the critic is always being swallowed up by the creative artist—that what starts out as the review of a book, or a play, or other work of art, usually develops very quickly into an independent essay upon the theme of that work of art, or upon some theme that it suggests—in a word, that it becomes a fresh work of art, and only indirectly related to the one that suggested it. This fact, indeed, is so plain that it scarcely needs statement. What the pedagogues always object to in, say, the Quarterly reviewers is that they forgot the books they were supposed to review, and wrote long papers—often, in fact, small books—expounding ideas of their own, many of them vastly removed from the ideas in the books under review. Every critic who is really worth reading falls into this habit. He cannot stick to his task: what is before him is always infinitely less interesting to him than what is within him. If he is genuinely first-rate—if what is within him stands the test of type, and wins an audience, and produces the reactions that every artist craves—then he usually ends by abandoning the criticism of specific works of art altogether, and setting up shop as a general merchant in general ideas, i. e., as an artist working in the materials of life itself.

Mere reviewing, however conscientiously and competently it is done, is plainly a much inferior business. Like writing poetry, it is chiefly a function of intellectual immaturity. The young literatus just out of the university, having as yet no capacity for grappling with the fundamental mysteries of existence, is put to writing reviews of books, or plays, or music, or painting. Very often he does it extremely well; it is, in fact, not hard to do well, for even decayed pedagogues often do it, as such graveyards of the intellect as the New York Times bear witness. But if he continues to do it, whether well or ill, it is a sign to all the world that his growth ceased when they made him Artium Baccalaureus. Gradually he be-

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comes, whether in or out of the academic grove, a pedagogue, which is to say, an artisan devoted to diluting and retailing the ideas of his superiors—not an artist, not even a bad artist, but almost the antithesis of an artist. He is learned, he is sober, he is painstaking and accurate—but he is as hollow as a jug. Nothing is in him save the ghostly echoes of other men's thoughts and feelings. If he were a genuine artist he would have thoughts and feelings of his own, and the impulse to give them objective form would be irresistible. An artist can no more withstand that impulse than a politician can withstand the temptations of a job. There are no mute, inglorious Miltons, save in the hallucinations of poets. The one sound test of a Milton is that he functions as a Milton. His difference from other men lies precisely in the superior vigor of his impulse to self-expression, not in the superior beauty and loftiness of his ideas. Other men, in point of fact, often have the same ideas, or perhaps even loftier ones, but they are able to suppress them, usually on grounds of decorum, and so they escape being artists, and are respected by right-thinking persons, and die with money in the bank, and are forgotten in two weeks.

Obviously, the critic whose performance we are commonly called upon to investigate is a man standing somewhere along the path leading from the beginning that I have described to the goal. He has got beyond being a mere cataloguer and valuer of other men's ideas, but he has not yet become an autonomous artist—he is not yet ready to challenge attention with his own ideas alone. But it must be plain that his motion, in so far as he is moving at all, must be in the direction of that autonomy—that is, unless one imagines him sliding backward into senile infantilism: a spectacle not unknown to literary pathology, but too pathetic to be discussed here. Bear this motion in mind, and the true nature of his aims and purposes becomes clear; more, the incurable falsity of the aims and purposes usually credited to him becomes equally clear. He is not actually trying to perform an impossible act of arctic justice upon the artist whose work gives him a text. He is not trying, with mathematical passion, to find out exactly what was in that artist's mind at the moment of creation, and to display it precisely and in an ecstacy of appreciation. He is not trying to bring the work discussed into accord with some gaudy theory of aesthetics, or ethics, or truth, or to determine its degree of departure from that theory. He is not trying to lift up the fine arts, or to defend democracy against sense, or to promote happiness at the domestic hearth, or to convert sophomores into right-thinkers, or to serve God. He is not trying to fit a group of novel phenomena into the orderly process of history. He is not even trying to discharge the catalytic office that I myself, in a romantic moment, once sought to force upon him. He is, first and last, simply trying to express himself. He is trying (*a*) to arrest and challenge a sufficient body of readers, to make them pay attention to him, to impress them with the charm and novelty of his ideas, to provoke them into an enchanted awareness of him, and (*b*) to achieve thereby for his own inner ego that agreeable feeling of a function performed, a tension relieved, a katharsis attained which Beethoven achieved when he wrote the Fifth Symphony, and a hen achieves every time she lays an egg.

It is, in brief, the "obscure, inner necessity" of Joseph Conrad that moves him: everything else is an afterthought. Conrad is moved by that necessity to write romances; Beethoven was moved to write music; poets are moved to write poetry; critics are moved to write criticism. The form is nothing; the only important thing is the motive power—and it is the same in all cases. It is the hot yearning of every man who has ideas to empty them upon the world, to hammer them into plausible and ingratiating shapes, to compel the attention and respect of his equals, to lord it over his inferiors. So seen, the critic becomes a far more transparent and agreeable fellow than ever he was in the discourses of the psychologists who sought to make him a mere appraiser in an intellectual customs house, a gauger in a distillery of the spirit, a just and infallible judge upon the cosmic bench. Such offices, in point of fact, never fit him. He always bulges over their confines. So labelled and estimated, it always turns out that the specific critic under examination is a very bad one, or no critic at all. But when he is thought of, not as pedagogue, but as artist, then he begins to take on reality, and, what is more, dignity. Carlyle was surely no just and infallible judge; on the contrary, he was full of prejudices, biles, naïvetés, humors. Yet he is read, consulted, attended to. Macaulay was unfair, inaccurate, fanciful, lyrical—yet his essays live. Arnold had his faults too, and so did Sainte-Beuve, and so did Goethe, and so did many another of that line—and yet they are remembered today, and all the learned and conscientious critics of their time, laboriously concerned with the precise intent of the artists under review, and passionately determined to set it forth with god-like care and to relate it exactly to this or that great stream of ideas—all these pedants are forgotten. What saved Carlyle, Macaulay and company is as plain as day. They were first-rate artists. They could make the thing charming, and that is always a million times more important than making it true.

Truth, indeed, is something that is believed in only by persons who have never tried personally to pursue it to its fastnesses and grab it by the tail. It is the adoration of second-rate men—men who always receive it at second-hand. Pedagogues believe in immutable truths and spend their lives trying to determine them and propagate them; the intellectual progress of man consist largely of a concerted effort to block and destroy their enterprise. In the department of aesthetics, wherein critics mainly disport themselves, it is almost impossible to think of a so-called truth that shows any sign of being permanently true. The most profound of principles begins to fade and quiver almost as soon as it is stated. But the work of art, as opposed to the theory behind it, has a longer life, particularly if that theory is obscure and questionable, and so cannot be determined accurately. Hamlet, the Mona Lisa, Faust, Dixie, Parsifal, Mother Goose, Annabel Lee, Huckleberry Finn—these things, so baffling to pedagogy, so contumacious to the categories, so mysterious in purpose and utility—these things live. And why? Because there is in them the delightful flavor of odd and attractive personality, because the quality that shines from them is not that of correct demeanor but that of creative passion, because they pulse and breathe and speak, because they are genuine works of art. So with criticism. Let us forget all the heavy effort to make a science of it; it is a fine art, or nothing. If the critic, retiring to his cell to concoct his treatise upon a book or play or what-not, produces a piece of writing that shows sound structure, and brilliant color, and the flash of novel and persuasive ideas, and civilized manners, and the charm of an uncommon personality in

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free function, then he has given something to the world that is worth having, and sufficiently justified his existence. Let him leave the exact truth to professors of aesthetics, who can no more determine it than he can, and will infallibly make it idiotic. He is an artist, not a schoolmaster.

What I preach will be labelled at once and thrust into its pigeon-hole: it is impressionism. True. But it is impressionism that is not to be monkeyed with: it depends too much upon the impressionist.

H. L. MENCKEN.

A Critical Credo

IT is a waste and weary labor to open up again the old question of reviewing and criticism. On the one hand there should be no distinction between them; the reviewer's business is to criticize the book before him. But too often in practice the reviewer is expected to compile a library list for the average unintelligent reader. On the other hand, economic necessity nowadays compels the critic to become a reviewer. So that the valuable modern distinction is not so much the distinction between the critic and the reviewer, as the impossibilists frequently urge, as that between the critic-reviewer and the puff-reviewer. We must leave out the puff-reviewer. God will reward him as surely as his employer does.

Speaking of criticism, Rémy de Gourmont said that "the whole effort of a sincere man was to erect his personal impressions into laws." That is the motto of a true criticism, conscious of its limitations and its strength. The emphasis falls even more decidedly upon the law-making than upon the personal basis of the impressions, for that is inevitable. The man who is content to record his own impressions, without making an effort to stabilize them in the form of laws, whatever he is, is not a critic. A law or rule, or rather a system of laws or rules, is necessary to the critic; it is a record of all his past impressions and reactions; but it must be his own law, his own system, refined by his own effort out of his own experience. Otherwise he is a pedant and not a critic.

The function of criticism is, therefore, primarily the function of literature itself, to provide a means of self-expression for the critic. He begins like any other writer, with the conviction (which may of course be an illusion) that his views and conclusions on the subject-matter which is literature are of importance in themselves and to others; and he proceeds to promulgate and propagate them. Like any other writer, he stands or falls in the long run, by the closer or more remote approximation of his views to the common experience of that comparatively small fraction of the human race which itself comes to conclusions about life and literature, which is the concentrated record of life. As Dr. Johnson said:

> Nothing can please many and please long, but just representations of human nature. Particular manners can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied. The irregular combinations of fanciful invention may delight awhile, by that novelty of which the common satiety of life sends us all in quest; but the pleasures of sudden wonder are soon exhausted, and the mind can repose only on the stability of truth.

The critic stands or falls by the stability of his truth, and to a less degree by his technique in expressing his truth.

That the critic has to interest his readers is true, but in exactly the same sense as it is true that every writer has to interest his readers. He does not have to aim at being more interesting than other writers. This is one of the prime heresies of modern criticism. Its adherents appear to hold that a critical article is a kind of knockabout turn. Unless the critic is turning a somersault or making a grimace in every sentence, he is dull. Another, and more persuasive heresy is that it is the critic's business to make the best of a bad book by picking out the one or two plums that have wandered into the wilderness of dough. A critic, they argue, has to communicate "gusto" to his readers, no matter what book he may be writing about. These seem to me to be pure heresies and the critics who embrace them will surely be forgotten.

Criticism is a particular art of literature. It is possible not to like the art, and possible for the critic to regret that his art is not liked. But it is not, or ought not to be possible for a critic to play the traitor to his art in order to get a bigger audience for his raree-show. Because a sculptor knows that sculpture is not popular, he does not paint moustaches on his figures or plant billycock hats on the top of their heads. The critic's business is to express himself by expressing his opinion on the work of literature before him. He has therefore to make sure that his opinion is his true opinion; he has to safeguard himself against accidental and temporary disturbances of his sensibility. Hence the need for a system of principles to control momentary enthusiasms and passing disgusts.

Moreover, he is concerned to elucidate the significance of the work before him, for his verdict is a verdict as to significance. A work of literature may possess significance of various kinds; it may have historical, ethical, or aesthetic significance; that is, it may have importance at a particular phase of the human consciousness, or it may be valuable as expressing a particular attitude towards human life, or it may have more or less of a certain kind of artistic perfection which compels a peculiar artistic emotion in the reader. A work may have significance of one of these kinds, or all of them, or any combination of them. A critic is bound to have a predisposition towards one of these kinds of significance; he will be predominantly a historian, like Sainte-Beuve, a moralist like Paul Elmer More or Irving Babbitt, or a technician like Dr. Bridges. He ought to be aware of his predisposition and alert to prevent it from running away with him. A perfect critic would combine all these predispositions in equal parts, but perfect critics are as rare as perfect writers. It is as much as one can ask that a critic should try to correct his predisposition by training his appreciation of other kinds.

Once criticism is accepted as an independent literary art, there need be no heart-searching among critics because they have so little practical influence on the sale of books. That is the fact in England at any rate. It is a hundred times more profitable to an author for the Daily Mail to declare "This book will be a success" than for the best critic on the Times Literary Supplement to give exact and convincing reasons why the book ought to be a success. Critical articles and essays are read for themselves; at their best they are perfectly self-contained; they do not demand that the reader should dash out and purchase the books which they discuss, and as often as not they are read with the greatest interest by those who are already themselves profoundly familiar with the subject.

Putting a valuation upon new books is perhaps the least valuable part of criticism. It is almost impossible for a

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literary critic to be really sincere in dealing with contemporary production. It is as difficult for him to tell the truth about the bad work of men who have done good, as to tell the truth about the good work of men who generally do bad. In the first case his hand is checked by fear of doing harm, in the second by the fear of doing good. Again, it is intolerable to be severe to a well-meaning beginner, although a critic knows that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. There are too many thorns in the path of criticism of contemporaries. For we have not even mentioned the personal resentment too often cherished by our victims. The dangers of log-rolling are at least equalled by the dangers of revenge. A successful author, however much he may be dubious of the genuineness of his own powers, cannot help believing that his success is somehow due to his merits; he is bound to persuade himself that a slating is the expression of some personal hostility.

Unfortunately, few critics are in the happy position of being able to write about contemporaries only when they can sincerely praise them. For the most part they have to conform to the exigencies of reviewing, to write on texts they would not choose, to consider susceptibilities that are an obstacle to their free expression. No doubt the English tradition of anonymity is a defence against some of these evils. But it leaves the door open to other worse ones. A critic does not care to hide behind an editorial "we" when he attacks a writer; nor on the other hand is it good to be compelled always to hide one's light under a bushel. A good criticism is as much a work of art as a good poem; its author deserves his reward in reputation as well as money. Besides, if his readers are not permitted to distinguish his work they cannot follow the sequence and evolution of his ideas. A critic cannot be always enunciating his principles. What looks like the veriest dogmatism in an isolated review, may, if put into relation to other utterances, be seen to have a convincing scheme of values behind it.

Criticism is an art. It has its own technique. Ideally at least, this technique would have its different perfection for each several critic. But we may outline so much of the method as seems to be essential to the most important kind of criticism, appreciation.

First, the critic should endeavor to convey the whole effect of the work he is criticizing, its peculiar uniqueness. Second, to work back and define the unique quality of the sensibility which necessitated this expression. Third, to establish the determining causes of this sensibility. (Here the relevant circumstances of the writer's life have their proper place.) Fourth, to analyze the means by which this sensibility was given expression, in other words, to conduct a technical examination into the style. Fifth, a still closer examination of a perfectly characteristic passage, that is, a passage in which the author's sensibility is completely expressed. This fifth and final movement is really a return to the first, but with the important difference that the relevant material has been ordered and placed before the reader.

The various phases in this symphonic movement of an ideal criticism may, of course, be ordered quite differently. The historical or the ethical critic will enlarge more on the nature of the sensibility, its value in itself and its relation to other types of sensibility; he will pay little or no attention to the means by which this sensibility is expressed. He will not be a worse critic for that, but he will be a less *literary* critic. On the other hand the critic who is unable to adjudicate between the values of various kinds of sensibility has no means of distinguishing between great art and perfect art. That judgment is essential to a true criticism, in spite of (or rather in virtue of) the fact that it is in the last resort an ethical judgment.

There is not much need to worry ourselves about the function of criticism any more than we worry about the function of poetry. Both are arts; both have to give delight; both have to give the delights which are proper to themselves as arts. If it gives this delight, criticism is creative, for it enables the reader to discover beauties and significances which he had not seen, or to see those which he had himself glimpsed, in a new and revealing light. What, I think, we may reasonably ask, is that criticism should be less timid; that it should openly accept the fact that its deepest judgments are moral. A critic should be conscious of his moral assumptions and take pains to put into them the highest morality of which he is capable. That is only another way of saying that the critic should be conscious of himself as an artist. He should be aware of the responsibilities imposed by his art; he should respect the technique of his craft. He should not be cheap, he should not be shallow, he should not be insincere, either in praise or blame, but above all in these modern times, he should not be insincere in praise.

J. Middleton Murry.

Impressionism and Authority in Literary Criticism

THE craving for order and stability in human affairs naturally expresses itself in the field of criticism by emphasis on rules, standards and authority. Poets or creative spirits in literature may be men of the feverish or unstable temperament popularly known as the "artistic"; but critics have hitherto been for the most part pedagogues, men who preferred to occupy positions where they could live sheltered lives. Hence while scholars may discover in the literary criticism of the past an occasional antinomian or anarchic note, the presence of a whole school boldly emphasizing that attitude is a phenomenon characteristic of the present age. It may be due to the large number of people who find an easy if not lucrative occupation in passing quick rather than deliberate judgment on the literature of the day; or it may be due, as M. Brunetière suggested, to the leadership of men like Anatole France who are themselves primarily artists and who in their criticism simply play or experiment with ideas. But in any case it is a significant and distinctively contemporary phenomenon.

Like other widespread *isms*, impressionism has its definite creed. Its leader, Anatole France, has formulated it thus: There can be no such thing as objective criticism, for the critic can only give his own impressions, or narrate the adventures of his soul among masterpieces. It is easy to see that the dogmas that "we are shut up in our own personality as in a perpetual prison," and that "we can never come out of ourselves" are but naïve repetitions of our fashionable Berkeleyan subjective idealism, viz., that we can never know anything but our own impressions. This has a certain verbal plausibility so long as we entertain the dubious image of knowledge as a sort of material thing encased in the cranial cavity. But without stopping to rehearse the numerous philosophic fallacies involved in this view, common sense can be satisfied by simply denying the

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assertion that "we can never come out of ourselves." Whenever we learn something or express ourselves in any way we do come out of ourselves. Language and other social institutions are all visible denials of the claim that each of us is forever locked up in his separate cell and held in a state of incommunicado. Is not the admission that there are authors who have written books, and that the critic has a soul which can meet with adventures in reading these books,—is not this fatal to the subjectivist dogma? With characteristic geniality Anatole France admits that if we had the courage and followed his doctrine consistently we should have to be silent. But such austere and inhuman courage is, in fact, far from his temper. He passes many acute and discriminating judgments on diverse books and some of these judgments are very vigorous condemnations.

All this was pointed out by M. Brunetière more than twenty-five years ago in an essay on Impressionist Criticism which it has proved easier to ignore than to answer. M. Brunetière also seems to me eminently just in allowing for the half truth that makes the impressionist's professed credo so plausible. He admits that our judgment of a literary work depends in part on what we bring to it; but this surely does not deny the existence of something in the work which evokes our judgment, something put there by the author who had certain aims and used more or less appropriate means to attain these ends.

The world, however, does well to ignore the intellectual weakness of the dogmas by which impressionism has sought to justify its practice, for this practice does not really depend on nor grow out of dogmatic scepticism or nihilism—certainly no more so than M. Brunetière's practice really grows out of his appeal to evolutionist biology to justify the distinction between higher and lower forms. Not being professional philosophers the impressionists have just grabbed at the first available ambient idea as a reason or defence for refusing to depart from a cause to which they are impelled by much profounder and less easily formulated motives. Certainly there can be no doubt as to the admirable character of much of its actual achievement in literary criticism. It is even possible to maintain that the leader of this school, Anatole France, is generally more just, more learned and truly catholic, and more penetrating in his literary judgments than is the admirable leader of the classical authoritarian school, M. Brunetière himself. Thus, M. Brunetière, like his American imitators, is so passionate in his dislike of the unconventional Rousseau that he cuts himself off from the possibility of really explaining why Rousseau was able to stir so profoundly, not only the multitude of his and subsequent generations, but also such a typically unromantic philosopher as Kant. Conservatives may refuse to admit that there was profound justice in Rousseau's bitter arraignment of a social order that, despite elaborate cultivation and nice conventions, rested on such galling iniquity that the storm of 1789 toppled it over completely and no effort of the reaction after 1815 could restore it. But surely arguments for interpreting Rousseau's disagreeable nervous instability as insanity, cannot deny the patent fact that he clearly saw the causes of a revolution where learned historical scholars like Gibbon could see only order and stability. Contrast with this the justice of Anatole France to the aristocrats of the old régime. He sees them not as mere symbols of social parasitism—which he could truly do if he were only a partisan of the left—but as men and women, somewhat naïvely pompous, but possessed of true nobility which enabled them to walk to the scaffold maintaining their essential human dignity.

M. Brunetière suggests that the admirable character of the literary criticism of the impressionist school is due to the fact than men like Anatole France and Lemaître were trained in the old classical school. It would be unwise to doubt that sound perceptions and just judgments are more likely to come with than without cultivation. But surely classical training itself will not guarantee against the blindness which comes from a narrow adherence to preconceived principles. A remarkable illustration of this is to be found in the last book of the most accomplished and cultivated of our American classicists—Mr. Paul Elmer More. His admiration for the older Oxford makes him lose all sense of proportion in ridiculously extolling obscure and complacent dons of rather dubious self-control at table. At the same time he cannot forgive John Morley because the latter, though sensitive to the graces of aristocratic society, nevertheless honestly tries to remove the social iniquities which these graces adorn and by which they are supported.

I do not for a moment wish to maintain that the authoritarian school has not given us criticism of the greatest value; nor would I deny that in this country, especially, impressionism is sometimes but a cheap and thin cover for obvious ignorance, indolence, and incoherence. Indeed, any attempt to weigh and pronounce judgment on the relative values of the actual contributions of these two schools is entirely beyond my competence. What I wish to suggest is that the difference between impressionism and authoritarianism does not grow out of the reasons professed by the two, but rests rather on a ground more akin to that which separates modern inductive science from the classical a priori procedures. In opposition to the traditional distinction (which identifies impressionism with romanticism) we may note that nothing can be more classical than the judgments of Anatole France and Lemaître on authors like Zola and Ohnet; and nothing can be more typically romantic and subjective than the way Messrs. Babbitt, More and Sherman think they can ignore the relentless march of the methods of the natural sciences by burying their heads in the sands of their own arbitrary intuitions, or like Mrs. Partington try to sweep back the incoming tide with the frail pedagogic broom of authority.

The root of classic authoritarianism seems to me the horror of diversity and the craving above all for the peace and security of a prim and closed world where all our cherished possessions will be forever undisturbed. The root of impressionism is the horror of premature and cramping unity and the craving above all for the factual truth and fullness of life. Nisard, whose history of French literature is still the high water mark of clear and courageous classicism, has put the case in a nutshell by identifying classicism with the predominance of discipline over liberty—discipline is the dominant end and not merely a necessary means in the service of freedom. There can be no doubt that most people fear freedom and gladly set up authorities to avoid the disagreeable business of having to decide for themselves. "What is the correct dress for a boy of eight at a children's afternoon party?" inquires an anxious mother of a daily newspaper, and the answer of this freely chosen authority brings genuine relief to the one governed by it. Anatole France comes nearest to expressing the fundamental motive of impressionism when he defends his admiration for both Lamartine and Leconte de Lisle by saying "it seems to me

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that one has less chance of going entirely wrong in one's admiration when one admires things that are very different." In a world where the multitude of conflicting authorities and standards is bewildering and where there is hardly a first principle which has not led its devotees to the most irrational violence and heartless cruelty, it seems safer to trust to the immediate deliverance of our perception of fact. After all what, in the last resort, is the basis of any authority if not in something which we can perceive or apprehend? The perception of the past must, of course, be considered, and to cultivate the ultra modern virtue of a completely open mind to which everything is possible, is a feat which only the insane achieve. But in a rapidly changing world we are most likely to err grievously if we systematically distrust our own perceptions in favor of principles supposed to be derived from the perceptions of our ancestors.

This scepticism toward principles and trust in the facts of our own experience explains why Sainte-Beuve is the fountain-head of both impressionism and of the type of criticism which calls itself scientific—I mean the criticism of Taine, Hennequin, Ricardou, and their imitators in American universities. To the minds of many unbiased observers the latter school has made very little contribution to a right understanding of literature, and I think it is so largely because it has been more in love with the traditional *theory* of induction than with the facts of literature. This is shown in Taine's clinging to such abstractions as race, climate and epoch which are hopelessly thin as explanations of literary masterpieces. But who can deny that light can be thrown on the meaning of literary creations by the intensive study of the actual social and psychologic conditions under which they were produced? Certainly Sainte-Beuve made a notable beginning in this direction. In a complex and changing world the impressionist's distrust of hard and fast principles generally leads to greater justice towards conflicting claims, while the classicist-authoritarian by elevating his bias into an eternal and unalterable principle is apt to abandon the discrimination which is the essence of critical judgment. The authoritarian is always denouncing arbitrariness and wilfulness, but his refusal to consider the doubtful character of his own first principles—which others do doubt—shows more truly his motives and weakness.

One who approaches the subject from this point of view is tempted to say that the authoritarian suffers from the fear due to deficient vitality while the impressionist suffers from a vitality that is untamed. I think, however, that a great American philosopher, Charles S. Peirce, has given us a means for a more just and instructive, if less epigrammatic, analysis. Over forty years ago he published a series of articles in the Popular Science Monthly, entitled Illustrations of the Logic of Science. The second of these articles proved to be the basis of the philosophy now called pragmatism, but the first article, on the Fixation of Belief, is more significant for our present purpose. All men, Peirce assumes, desire a certain stability in their ideas. But there are two main roads by which this can be attained. The first is the method of iteration and authority. It is the method by which most people attain nearly all the beliefs they have. In a homogeneous community it works almost unconsciously through imitation,—we imitate the beliefs of the community in which we are born as we imitate its language and dress. One brought up in a Mohammedan village where everyone recites the famous formula five times a day, is not likely to be disturbed by any doubts as to whether Mohammed *is* the true prophet. But the moment he comes into contact with others, doubt is bound, sooner or later, to penetrate the armor of unquestioning repetition. The first reaction of communities to such doubt is to try to exterminate it by repression, varying from hard glances and ostracism to the burning of the doubter. But these methods of the Bastille, the inquisition, and the fires of Smithfield, cannot succeed while the cause of the doubt, the actual diversity of belief in the world, remains. It is the Greeks who discovered a method of attaining a progressive rather than a fixed stability of ideas by welcoming all possible doubt and dispensing with all authority. It is the method of science, as illustrated in Euclid's geometry. But the mathematicians of the nineteenth century have improved and extended this method by dispensing with any appeal to axioms as self-evident principles and showing that all material principles are but hypotheses—guesses in common language—to be justified by their consequences in the factual realm. With this the intellectual basis of the old authoritarianism is forever destroyed.

MORRIS R. COHEN.

Beauty and Use

SURELY criticism is an endeavor to know the good and make it known, and hence to disengage it from the evil. And criticism surely does this in the name of life, in the interest of a more satisfactory living. I do not mean in the interest of morality. I mean that criticism like morality itself—any sound morality—exists for the sake of life, the collective life, and for its well-being. How persistently has the touch of a blind moralism confused the subject! In how many dialects have we been told that criticism was in some sort the handmaid of righteousness and that all praiseworthy literature was so because it formed and tuned character or told us moral truths and showed us a better way of conducting ourselves. Great literature often does this, but it is not for this alone that it exists. Even the penetrating mind of Mr. Bernard Shaw has fallen a victim to the confusion. He condemns men of letters on the ground that they have "no ideas," that is, apparently, that they offer no suggestions for the reform of anything. (It is, as we shall presently see, the defeat of his merit.) He despises the disinterested creator of beauty as a mere "voluptuary." In this he forgets that literature may have another object than to mend the world, namely, to create for us new worlds, new and delightful objects of contemplation. To say that things, ideas or feelings are useful, is to say that they make for well-being. The enjoyment of excellent art need not make for well-being; it is well-being. It need not be good for anything else, for it is good in itself. So long as it lasts it is an example of that desirable state of life which moral rules and social reforms try to produce or protect. It is a portion of the end and need not force itself to become a means. With respect to such art it is the office of criticism to know and feel to the utmost the felicity that is there, to make it known and felt, to separate it from whatever may impair it, to carry the contagion of delight that it may be "in widest commonalty spread."

It is equally clear that this is not the sole excellence of literature and that to distinguish it is not the sole task of criticism. Criticism has a double duty, because literature—life itself—has a double aspect. Besides beauty, or

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intrinsic interest in any form, there is what Mr. Shaw and Matthew Arnold had in mind, there is use, there is help, there are the thoughts or revelations or flashes of suggestion that sober the spirit, that light up life and help us to find our way in it. With respect to this element in literature, it is the office of criticism to consider whether the thoughts bearing on conduct are true, whether they would in practice add to well-being. In this second field, it is not perception and appreciation only, but knowledge and clear thought that are indispensable. The critic on this side is not aesthetic merely but intellectual. We thus have in these two fields broadly different requirements; in the one to see and feel, in the other to understand and know. And, of course, they are infinitely intermingled. However, the concern of criticism with beauty and with use is the same concern, it is for the enhancement of life, now by direct gift of fine experiences, now by wise or moving thought that will shape conduct and so secure better experience in the future. A criticism that is forgetful of either of these two interests of life is an untrustworthy criticism.

All this is obvious. It is to a neglect of the obvious that the failures of criticism today are due. The second task, the task of gauging the value of whatever in literature bears on the question how to live, is actually treated in most quarters like the first task, that of discerning beauty and fitness; as though the critic's taste and intuition could settle the questions of the effects of action, ideas, institutions and men; and as though his loves and hates, his impressions and his guesses, could possibly furnish guidance through the confusion of our time. Here we have simply a specimen of the chief vice of cultivated thought today.

There is a consideration that concerns the very vitals of society and personal life, which "philosophy" knows and "culture" does not know—for philosophy—even in its most momentous elements—is not now a part of culture. Even in philosophy the consideration is dreamily and drowsily taught rather than applied. There is nothing more difficult to state, or rather of which it is more difficult actually to convey the purport, for it is supremely obvious, and we have formed a habit if we hear the statement of nodding acquiescence, so to speak, without understanding; the statement has already been made in this article as a kind of forlorn duty that must be gone through though it could not have any effect, being the mention of a familiar sounding and tolerated abstraction. It is that all moral judgment, nay all judgment whatever of actions, motives, ideas, institutions and men, can have but one standard or basis, their practical tendency to promote the collective welfare (except so far as certain ideas and feelings may be constituents of that welfare).

To take this inoffensive looking maxim seriously would transform criticism. It lies with criticism, by taking it seriously, to become an agency of singular power to forward the end. We should note for example that the writer ranking almost by common consent as the greatest in American literature, Emerson, whose essays, Matthew Arnold declared, were "the most important work done in prose" in the nineteenth century,—we should note that Emerson, despite his elevation, his courage and his surpassing guardianship of the dignity and serenity of the private soul, despite his extraordinarily free discernment of merits in the spectacle of men, essentially misleads his reader. His principal deliverance is false. It is his subordinate or attendant deliverances that are magnificent. He celebrates with moving devotion and force the supremacy of morals without once perceiving what morals are for. It is "behavior," not service, that fascinates him. Because certain acts and feelings are helpful we admire and love them and invest the opposite with disgrace. Emerson throws himself upon this esteem and disesteem, makes everything turn upon them, and completely forgets what they were all about and therefore how to bestow them justly. Bent on safeguarding our equanimity, he preaches that so long as we choose the moral side circumstances are indifferent, that it does not matter what we outwardly accomplish, that being good is better than doing good. So of course he has no clue to what the moral side is, except tradition and feeling. Watching the achievements and powers of men with a peculiar zest and delight, he here too forgets that the aim and test of achievement is the welfare of sentient beings, and seems to regard it all as spectacular, a kind of glorious performance, a high morality being, however, a finer performance still. But clear-sighted morality desires to control events and to secure well-being; it cannot be content with Emerson's lofty and enthralling circus. Not even our reverence for this superb spirit should prevent our saying so. Reverence too exists for a purpose, to assist us toward a common welfare, and when it prevents our recoiling from that which forgets welfare and is at enmity with the real demands of life, it is no longer a virtue.

In the support of his doctrine Emerson also maintains that there is a miraculous justice within the pale of this life by which all "virtue," because it is virtue, is in some sort after all successful, and all sin, because it is wrong, comes to naught. His superstition on this subject is really in terms of what is known as sympathetic magic. What a relief to turn to the robust remark of Franklin (wanting though he does the spiritual elevation of Emerson)—that acts are not harmful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are harmful—"in their own natures, all the circumstances of things considered!"

To take another illustration, if we should today bring Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wells to trial by the canons laid down by Arnold in his essay on Academies we should find them deeply guilty of "provinciality." The striving for effect "at the expense of soul," the want of amenity, the violence, the caprice, the vulgarity are there. And most of these are the deep blemishes that Arnold thought them. But then we must remember the clue and rule of proportion in criticism that our principles give us. In spite of such defects these authors possess the supreme merit that more than any others of note writing our language in our time they have grasped and applied what Emerson missed; what Carlyle and Browning and Meredith and a host of their contemporaries missed; what Arnold and George Eliot grasped but did not observantly apply, the key to the content of morality and to intelligence in living. If we cannot follow them in all their applications, if we perceive tracts of life that they have not penetrated, we must still admit the fidelity with which they have caught the sweep of the principle.

Literature is as wide as life and criticism cannot stay itself upon anything else than the principles of life.

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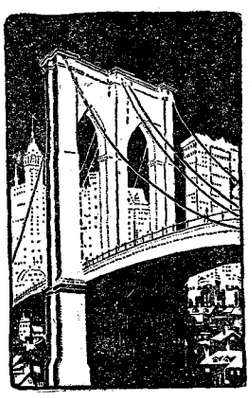

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The Critic as Guide

ALREADY I am in a scrape with the critics. I am in a scrape for having said, a couple of years ago, that a critic was nothing but a sign-post, and for having added, somewhat later, that he was a fallible sign-post at that. So now, contributing to a supplement which, being written by critics is sure to be read by them, I naturally take the opportunity of explaining that what I said, if rightly understood, was perfectly civil and obliging.

To recall what I did say: I said that critics exist for the public, and that it is no part of their business to help artists with good advice. I argued that a critic no more exists for artists than a palaeontologist does for the Dinosaurs on whose fossils he expatiates, and that, though artists happen to create those exciting objects which are the the matter of a critic's discourse, that discourse is all for the benefit of the critic's readers. For these, I said he is to procure aesthetic pleasures: and his existence is made necessary by the curious fact that, though works of art are charged with a power of provoking extraordinarily intense and desirable emotions, the most sensitive people are often incapable of experiencing them until a jog or a drop of stimulant even has been given to their appreciative faculties.

A critic should be a guide and an animator. His it is, first to bring his reader into the presence of what he believes to be art, then to cajole or bully him into a receptive frame of mind. He must, therefore, besides conviction, possess a power of persuasion and stimulation: and if anyone imagines that these are common or contemptible gifts, he mistakes. It would, of course, be much nicer to think that the essential part of a critic's work was the discovery and glorification of Absolute Beauty; only, unluckily, it is far from certain that absolute beauty exists, and most unlikely, if it does, that any human being can distinguish it from what is relative. The wiser course, therefore, is to ask of critics no more than sincerity, and to leave divine certitude to superior beings—magistrates, for instance, and curates, and fathers of large families, and Mr. Bernard Shaw. At any rate, it is imprudent, I am sure, in us critics, to maintain so stoutly as we are apt to do, that when we call a work of art "good" we do not mean simply that we like it with passion and conviction but that it is absolutely so, seeing that the most sensitive people of one age have ever extolled some things which the most sensitive of another have cried down, and have cried down what others have extolled. And, indeed, I will bet whatever my contribution may be worth that there is not a single contributor to this supplement who would not flatly contradict a vast number of those aesthetic judgments which have been pronounced with equal confidence by the most illustrious of his predecessors. No critic can be sure that what he likes has absolute value; and it is a mark of mere silliness to suppose that what he dislikes can have no value at all. Neither is there any need of certainty. A critic must have sincerity and conviction —he must be convinced of the genuineness of his own feelings. Never may he pretend to feel more or less or something other than what he does feel; and what he feels he should be able to express and even, to some extent, account for. Finally he must have the power of infecting others with his own enthusiasm. Anyone who possesses these qualities and can do these things I call a good critic.

"And what about discrimination?" says someone, "What about the very meaning of the word?" Certainly discrimination between artists, between the parts and qualities of a work of art, and between one's own reactions, are important instruments of criticism; but they are not the only ones, nor I believe are they indispensable. At any rate, if the proper end of criticism be the fullest appreciation of art, if the function of a critic be the stimulation of the reader's power of comprehending and enjoying, all means to that end must be good. The rest of this essay will be devoted to a consideration of the means most commonly employed.

Discriminating critics, as opposed to those other two great classes—The Impressionistic and The Biographical —are peculiar in this amongst other things: they alone extract light from refuse and deal profitably with bad art. I am not going back on my axiom—The proper end of criticism is appreciation: but I must observe that one means of stimulating a taste for what is most excellent is an elaborate dissection of what is not. I remember walking with an eminent contributor to the New Republic and a lady who admired so intemperately the writings of Rupert Brooke that our companion was at last provoked into analyzing them with magisterial severity. He concluded by observing that a comparison of the more airy and fantastic productions of this gallant young author with the poems of Andrew Marvell would have the instant effect of putting the former in their place. The lady took the hint; and has since confessed that never before had she so clearly seen or thoroughly enjoyed the peculiar beauties, the sweetness, the artful simplicity and sly whimsicality of the most enchanting of English poets. The discriminating critic is not afraid of classifying artists and putting them in their places. Analysis is one of his most precious instruments. He will pose the question—"Why is Milton a great poet?"—and will proceed to disengage certain definite qualities, the existence of which can be proved by demonstration and handled objectively with almost scientific precision. This sort of criticism was brought to perfection in the eighteenth century; and certainly it did sometimes lead critics quite out of sight and reach of the living spirit of poetry. It was responsible for masses of amazing obtuseness (especially in criticism of the visual arts); it was the frequent cause of downright silliness; it made it possible for Dr. Johnson, commenting on the line "Time and the hour runs through the roughest day," to "suppose every reader is disgusted at the tautology": but it performed the immense service of stimulating enthusiasm for clear thought and exact expression. These discriminating and objective critics will always be particularly useful to those whose intellects dominate their emotions, and who need some sort of intellectual jolt to set their aesthetic sensibilities going. Happily, the race shows no signs of becoming extinct, and Sir Walter Raleigh and M. Lanson are the by no means unworthy successors of Dr. Johnson and Saint-Evremond.

It is inexact to say that the nineteenth century invented impressionist criticism; but it was in the later years of that century that impressionism became self-conscious and pompous enough to array itself in a theory. The method everyone knows: the critic clears his mind of general ideas, of canons of art, and, so far as possible, of all knowledge of good and evil; he gets what emotions he can from the work before him, and then confides them to the public. He does not attempt to criticize in the literal sense of the word; he merely tells us what a book, a picture or a piece of music made him feel. This method can be intensely exciting; what is more, it has made vast additions to our

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aesthetic experience. It is the instrument that goes deepest: sometimes it goes too deep, passes clean through the object of contemplation, and brings up from the writer's own consciousness something for which in the work itself no answerable provocation is to be found. This leads, of course, to disappointment and vexation, or else to common dishonesty, and can add nothing to the reader's appreciation. On the other hand, there are in some works of art subtleties and adumbrations hardly to be disentangled by any other means. In much of the best modern poetry—since Dante and Chaucer I mean—there are beauties which would rarely have been apprehended had not someone, throwing the whole apparatus of objective criticism aside, vividly described, not the beauties themselves, but what they made him feel. And I will go so far as to admit that, in a work of art, there may be qualities significant and precious but so recondite and elusive that we shall hardly grasp them unless some adventurer, guided by his own experience, can trace their progress and show us their roots in the mind from which they sprang.

Impressionistic criticism of literature is not much approved nowadays, though Mr. Arthur Symons and one or two of his contemporaries still preserve it from the last outrages of a new and possibly less subtle generation, while M. Proust, by using it to fine effect in his extraordinary masterpiece may even bring it again into fashion. But it has got a bad name by keeping low company; for it has come to be associated with those journalistic reviewers who describe, not the feelings and ideas provoked in them by reading a book, but what they thought and felt and did at or about the time they were supposed to be reading it. These are the chatterboxes who will tell you how they got up, cut themselves shaving, ate sausages, spilt the tea, and nearly missed the train in which they began to read the latest work of Benedetto Croce, which, unluckily, having got into conversation with a pretty typist or a humorous bagman, they quite forgot, left in the carriage, and so can tell you no more about. But this is not impressionism, it it mere vulgarity.

If in literary criticism the impressionist method is falling into disfavor, in the criticism of music and painting it holds the field. Nor is this surprising: to write objectively about a symphony or a picture, to seize its peculiar intrinsic qualities and describe them exactly in words, is a feat beyond the power of most. Wherefore, as a rule, the unfortunate critic must either discourse on history, archaeology and psychology, or chatter about his own feelings. With the exception of Mr. Roger Fry, there is not in England one critic capable of saying so much, to the purpose, about the intrinsic qualities of a work of visual art as half a dozen or more—Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. Murry, Mr. Squire and Mr. MacCarthy to begin with—can be trusted to say easily, and, if necessary, weekly, about the intrinsic qualities of a book. To be sure, Mr. Fry is a great exception: with my own ears have I heard him take two or three normally intelligent people through a gallery and by severely objective means provoke in them a perfect frenzy of enthusiasm for masterpieces of utterly different schools and ages. Doubtless that is what art-criticism should be; but perhaps it is wrong to despise utterly those who achieve something less.

Just at present it is the thing to laugh at biographical and historical critics, a class of which Sainte-Beuve is the obvious representative, and to which belong such writers as Taine and Francesco de Sanctis and all who try to explain works of art by describing their social and political circumstances. "At any rate," it is said, "these are not *critics*." I shall not quarrel over words; but I am persuaded that, when they care genuinely for books and have a gift of exposition, these perform the same function as their more aesthetically-minded brethren. I am sure that a causerie by Sainte-Beuve often sends a reader, with a zest he had never found unaided, to a book he had never opened unadvised. There are plenty of men and women, equipped to relish the finest and subtlest things in literature, who can hardly come at a book save through its author, or at an author save through the story of his life and a picture of his surroundings; wherefore few things do more to promote and disseminate a taste for art and letters and, I will add, for all things of the spirit, than biographical and historical criticism and the discussion of tendencies and ideas.

And this brings me to my conclusion. Though the immediate object of criticism is to put readers in the way of appreciating fully a work or works in the merit of which the critic believes, its ultimate value lies further afield in more general effects. Good criticism not only puts people in the way of appreciating particular works; it makes them feel, it makes them remember, what intense and surprising pleasures are peculiar to the life of the spirit. For these it creates an appetite, and keeps that appetite sharp: and I would seriously advise anyone who complains that his taste for reading has deserted him to take a dip into the great critics and biographers and see whether they will not send him back to his books. For, though books, pictures and music stand charged with a mysterious power of delighting and exciting and enhancing the value of life; though they are the keys that unlock the door to the world of the spirit—the world that is best worth living in—; busy men and women soon forget. It is for critics to be ever jogging their memories. Theirs it is to point the road and hold open the unlocked doors. In that way they become officers in the kingdom of the spirit or, to use a humbler and preferable term, essential instruments of culture.

CLIVE BELL.

The Critic as Witness

CAN an object be at once beautiful and evil? On this point, it seems to me, an enormous amount of American criticism has revolved. Those who are mainly ethical in their preoccupation are, on the whole, afraid of aesthetic experience as possessing a Circean allurement. Their first concern is to discover whether any given object is blameless and likely to conduce to a blameless life. In reaction to such moralists there are those who resent the idea that aesthetic experience can in any way be connected with the question of conduct. These aesthetes are concerned simply with their sensations of what is, or what is not, beautiful. And in many cases they find beauty in objects, in relationships, in situations, that are wholly repugnant to the moralist; and they take particular jôy in rubbing it in. The bad manners of the lovers of beauty, in this regard, are only exceeded by the bad temper of the moralists. Neither side gives any quarter or permits any easy inquiry.

For myself, I do not see how an object can be at once beautiful and evil. If a man says, Don't you think this Spanish shawl a lovely red?, I can take my experience of the shawl aesthetically and respond. But if he says, this cancer is the same color as the shawl, don't you think it a lovely red?, I don't believe I can call my experience of

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the cancer aesthetic. My practical feeling about the cancer is too violent to allow me to have the frame of mind in which I can see it detachedly. I can likewise hardly conceive an artist as subduing a cancerous object to an aesthetic design. Where the element of representation is involved and where the objects represented raise the problems of life-as-a-whole, I cannot for the life of me see how a man can help moralizing. The only difference is the difference between people in the objects that raise the problems of life-as-a-whole. The more consummate a work of art is, the less likely it is, if you like, to raise practical issues. But if a statue of Venus makes a Purity Leaguer sex-conscious, the Purity Leaguer is only more absurdly self-centred than the person who cannot read The Statue and the Bust without feeling that he has a weak will. It may fairly be said, I think, that the more finely sensitive a man it to aesthetic objects the less likely he is to become moralistic. But this does not contradict the fact that many objects are presented for aesthetic experience which are not immediately appealing. The Arabs eat sheeps' eyes with great relish, but we, who eat lobsters without putting ourselves in the lobsters' place, have to learn to de-moralize our attitude towards sheeps' eyes. And sometimes the object proposed to us for aesthetic experience raises far too many moral complications. To do this, in point of fact, is something that calls for aesthetic criticism. A real artist avoids creating moral complications.

Yet the good critic—of literature, that is to say—is not engrossed in moral considerations. He is not mainly concerned with conduct. He exists primarily to convey his aesthetic satisfactions and dissatisfactions. That is the essential thing for him to do.

The critic exists to convey his aesthetic satisfactions and the reverse. He may develop a way of systematizing his experiences or devise a method by which experiences like these may best be plotted out, approached and enjoyed. There is a wise way and a "best" way of doing everything. But the discussion of the "best" way is not in itself the critical performance. It is not the end for which criticism exists. It is simply one supreme aid to that full ascertainment of aesthetic experience which is the right finality of the critic.

We are told by important men that wars are not won in the field. They are won in the laboratories of the chemist, the class-rooms of the military college, the four-minute speeches of Bond sellers, the playgrounds of Eton and Pawpaw. It sounds plausible. But imagine an army that sends back word to the propagandists, "very well, win your war in your chemist-shops and movie-theatres." Such quietism at the front would reveal a defect in these pleasant bloodless assumptions at the rear. There is a similar defect in the usual assumptions of those theoreticians who dismiss the impressionist critic. The man immersed in theory forgets that without aesthetic "impressionism," (or, plainly speaking, impressions), his theory could not subsist. Without theory, let us hasten to admit, there may be intellectual anarchy. Theory does not constitute experience, and the possession of all the best aesthetic theories in the world does not guarantee one syllable of one's criticism; but theory does, by creating a medium of intellectual exchange, establish a working currency of emotions and ideas. In so far as the impressionist refuses to deal in the established theoretic currency, he does not convey his aesthetic satisfactions in the most convenient manner. He even gives people who dislike his emotions and ideas a very respectable excuse for discounting him. Aesthetic theory, therefore, has this relation to the critic's experience, that it gives people an intellectual handle to it.

This has its danger. Theorists are aggrandizers and they teach many inexperienced and intimidated persons to defer religiously to theory as such. A large class is formed of persons more or less acutely dogmatic who never go to the root of the matter, their own personal satisfactions and dissatisfactions. Since aesthetic satisfactions and dissatisfactions operate for the most part involuntarily, whether admitted or ignored, I conclude that it is unsound and misleading to subordinate the evidence of one's actual feelings. Experience should precede theory. An inflexibility in their dear theory is the defect of most classicists. They seek to impose correct taste with no regard for the actual operations of personality. To meet this practice of the theory-makers it is necessary to be forearmed.

To be forearmed, however, one must be candid. It does not lead anywhere to talk in a mystical strain about such vague things as the operations of personality, and the sanctions of experience in a world of flux and change. I am not sure, for one thing, that many of us know how to estimate our experiences. We feel as we think we should feel, and we think as we feel we should think. But while I do not believe in our ability to lay hold of our "intuitions" very easily, it is scarcely contestable that the true sources of aesthetic satisfaction and dissatisfaction are deep in our emotional and visceral life, and aesthetic satisfaction and dissatisfaction cannot be made the subject of sound theory without digging into the operations of personality.

We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep. Very well. But we dream as we hope and fear, love and hate, hunger and ache and yearn, shudder, tremble and soar; and so we respond or do not respond to literature. While literature may be something which we meet with our naked spirits and dispositions, it also may be taken reflectively, through the medium of what we know and have known, feel and have felt. The way we come complicated to literature affects our satisfaction. Any night in any playhouse, men touching elbows may be aesthetic worlds apart. The moralist is unhappy at the very instant when the artist is delighted. The schoolboy itches with sex when his senior may swim blithely in a sea of color and form; or the reverse. To say that a critic can convey his experiences without including his personality is to deny the fact that he is an organism, not merely a mechanism. And to know the ways of personality is consequently indispensable.

What one sincere critic conveys is not necessarily as valuable as what some other sincere critic conveys. Witnesses may be equally sincere without being equally illuminating. The vantage point, the temperament, the susceptibility, the equipment—all that may be lumped in the word "intuition"—must be taken into account before a critic's performance can be estimated. This is certain. It is also certain that a rough-and-ready method of grading a critic's capacity is to find out what he thinks of Dante, Shakespeare, Homer, Jones, Smith and Robinson. But this vulgar method is so clumsy as to be repellant to practically everyone who really values personality and knows the meaning of aesthetic satisfaction. The vulgarians who have the temerity to establish a "Hall of Fame" are satisfied with such exterior tests. They themselves apply them. But this banal institutionalism does more harm than good. It multiplies the gods that are imposed on humanity without humanity's consent. The essence of aesthetic satisfaction is precisely the element of consent which institutions

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tend to disregard. To ask for its presence is not to say that its presence ratifies as fine whatever is consented to. It is simply to insist that without genuine rapport there is no spark of life in anything that is written or said about literature. This unfortunately implies that our national aesthetic tradition in colleges and critical journals is to a great extent fraudulent or, at best, superstitious. To such fraud or superstition our academic and pedagogic leaders undoubtedly lend themselves. They are custodians of custom and exponents of repressive discipline. They feel compelled to "edify" and it is easier to edify by stamping a student from the outside than by engaging him from within. And yet what is within is the thing that determines aesthetic satisfaction.

This does not mean that by the easy device of extending or holding back his precious consent any self-willed person can set himself up as a critic. It is part of the art of criticism that the critic *convey* his aesthetic satisfactions: to assert that certain assonances are beautiful in poetry does not make them beautiful. Their beauty must be such that it can, at least theoretically, be conveyed to a like-constituted person; and it cannot be conveyed unless it was originally felt. If it were actually felt, so that a genuine satisfaction was experienced in their recipient—a satisfaction of an aesthetic character—it is of no importance how many or how few people agree as to their beauty. Beautiful they are. But to convey an aesthetic satisfaction the critic (who is, after all, only a serious articulate experiencer) must be on sincere terms with his own sensuous nature. He must know clearly how to distinguish between the satisfaction of his social self, his religious self, his ethical self, his intellectual self, and his aesthetic self. A novel experience of any kind may gratify curiosity intensely and yet the gratification of curiosity is not an aesthetic gratification. It is something that feeds the mind. It does not properly constitute that experience of well-being which is at the basis of aesthetic satisfaction.

That peculiar experience of well-being is connected with our senses. We make our way in this world by extending ourselves in as many directions and by as many means as possible. One manner in which we extend ourselves is the scientific, which gives us command of cause and effect and enables us to comprehend those circumstances of life that can be reduced to cause and effect. Another way in which we extend ourselves is the aesthetic, which takes command of our bodily sensations and enables us to subdue to beauty or disinterested sensuous satisfaction as wide a range of phenomena as possible. Beauty is a light that may fall on any reality whatever and give us the power to release our emotions happily in the presence of that reality. So subtle are the senses, and so lively to record satisfaction or dissatisfaction, that we may have the keenest emotions not merely about objects of direct utility but about patterns of material and rhythms of sound which to all appearances subserve no practical purposes. It is an acute present realization of congeniality between any object of the senses and oneself. It may be summoned by the story of an elephant, the picture of two street-cleaners, the sight of a mountain, the whistle of a bird. Aesthetic satisfaction is our experience of taking into ourselves in a full sensuous comprehension whatever meets our aliveness to animate and inanimate existence. It is a matter not of ordered thinking but of intuition. It is a trusting to the discrimination of the senses in the welter of the sensory world. The more perfect the form of any object, the more reassuring and economic, the more absolutely the senses seem to give themselves to it, and the more delicate and delicious the acuteness of present realization. This epicureanism, however, is not so unexacting as it sounds. In the perspective of beauty one crude loyalty precludes many finer loyalties. Hence gradation becomes serious and significant. Dissatisfaction and rejection are as imperative as satisfaction and acceptance. It is the person who rushes about among things he does not deeply experience who is confused, unstable and insincere. The true figure of the lover of beauty is athletic.

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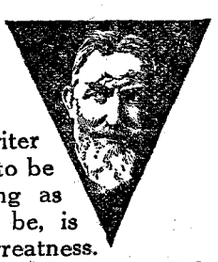

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